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# BRIEF MEMOIRS

OF

## NICHOLAS FERRAR, M.A.

FOUNDER OF A PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT AT  
LITTLE GIDDING, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Chiefly collected from a Narrative

BY

THE RIGHT REV. DR. TURNER,

FORMERLY LORD BISHOP OF ELY;

And now edited, with Additions,

BY

THE REV. T. M. MACDONOGH,

VICAR OF BOVINGDON.

SECOND EDITION.

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46 St. Martin's Lane.



TO THE HONOURABLE  
GRANVILLE DUDLEY RYDER.

THE first edition of this little volume was dedicated to my mother—it was a surprise to her. The second edition I venture to dedicate to you, to whom also it will be a surprise. Pray pardon the liberty, and accept the poor offering as it is meant.

The *first* edition was published anonymously. To the *second* I affix my name, because I care not how publicly I acknowledge myself

Your grateful

And affectionate servant,

T. M. MACDONOGH.

*Bovingdon Vicarage,  
June 1837.*



## PREFACE.

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DR. FRANCIS TURNER, formerly Bishop of Ely, the biographer of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, was of opinion, that "his life was not only admirable but imitable — by the gentry especially — or by his fellow-citizens, who gain plentiful estates, and then retire into the country."

He adds, in a preface intended to have been published with the Life of Ferrar: "*If some things* in this Life are rather to be admired than followed, I confess I had two ends in writing it: first, and especially, as an exemplary pattern of Christian economics; secondly, as an illustrious example of a more illuminate man in the Church of England than any, I believe, they can shew us in the Church of Rome, if they will tell us nothing but the honest truth; or any other sect whatever."

The Editor thinks, also, that the contemplation of so holy and self-denying a character

may, under the Divine blessing, have a very advantageous tendency in exciting a spirit of devotion in professing Christians, and in stimulating them to a holy emulation of those works which are the fruits, though not the foundation, of their faith. All classes of Christians may derive useful lessons from the exemplary temper and self-denying devotedness displayed in the character of this excellent man.

The Editor is aware that there is a *Life of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar* extant, by Dr. Peckard; but it is a scarce book. He is also not ignorant that that *Life* has been reprinted in Dr. Dodsworth's "*Ecclesiastical Biography*," a very valuable but voluminous work, to which comparatively few readers can have access. In the present form, the *Memoirs* are attainable by many who never would have met with them while they remained only in expensive or scarce biographical books. Of the truth of this observation the Editor has had repeated proof since the publication of the first edition; inasmuch as very many persons, of varied and extensive reading, had never even heard of Ferrar until they saw these *Memoirs*.

They are again put forth with a mixture of real diffidence and humble hope : of diffidence, lest the Editor's part of this little book should be found unworthy of the subject ; of hope, that the principles and acts of such a man and Christian as Nicholas Ferrar, as far as they are imitable—and no one without an effort knows the extent to which they are so—may, by Divine grace, be blessed, to the benefit of the Church, and the usefulness and happiness of individuals.

If any young person into whose hands this book may fall should see in Mr. Ferrar's character the rare beauty of great industry and transcendent talents united with deep humility, filial piety, and Christian devotedness ; and should be constrained by his early love to God, his useful life, and happy death, to pursue a course so lovely and so blessed ; then, indeed, will the Editor have great cause for thankfulness, in having been, in any degree, instrumental in drawing such a character more into public notice, and in exciting an imitation, although humble, of so illustrious an example.

The present edition differs from the former in this respect, that some points of historical

record connected with the history of Ferrar, before inserted in an Appendix, are now blended into the narrative, and the Appendix itself is discarded. The Editor has endeavoured to make these interpolations as little digressive as possible.

# MEMOIRS

OF

## NICHOLAS FERRAR.

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### CHAPTER I.

MR. NICHOLAS FERRAR was born in London on the first of February, in the year of our Lord 1592, and was admitted, by baptism, into the congregation of Christ's flock on the twenty-eighth of the same month; a day noted and registered by himself, in after years, as more memorable than the day of his birth; esteeming it, as he ought, a greater blessing to be received into the Catholic church, than to come into the world.

He was the third son of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, a wealthy merchant, and of his wife Mary, of whom Bishop Lindsell was accustomed to say, "he knew of no woman superior to her in eloquence, true judgment, or wisdom; and that few were equal to her in

charity towards men, and in piety towards God." And as the son became a follower of St. John the Baptist, in a retired and mortified life, so the parents were characterised by that good report which the word of God bestows on Zacharias and Elizabeth, the father and mother of that burning and shining light, when it says, that "they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." In his childhood he is said to have possessed great personal beauty; and though he never enjoyed a very robust state of health, but was subject to feverish and aguish maladies from his infancy, yet his vigorous temper of mind overcame, in a great measure, the indisposition of his body; so that he was noted, not only for the activity peculiar to youth, but also for a graceful and lively demeanour.

His talents began to develop themselves at as early an age as six, when he became much attached to the perusal and study of history; but the Bible especially occupied his attention, and engaged his affections. In two or three years he had made himself surprisingly acquainted with the historical part of the inspired



volume; and at this time he had committed all the Psalms to memory. Then he took up the English Chronicles, and the Book of Martyrs, which, whilst other boys of his age would be playing, he would be reading; and rather than not finish his story, which he seldom forgot, he would often neglect his meals and his sleep, in both of which he was naturally moderate.

A circumstance which occurred in his sixth year evinces how early sentiments of religion had taken possession of his mind. Being one night unable to sleep, a fit of scepticism seized him, and gave him the greatest uneasiness. He doubted whether there was a God, and if there were, what was the most acceptable method of serving him. In extreme grief he rose at midnight, and went down to a grass-plot in the garden, where he stood a long time sad and pensive, reflecting seriously on the great doubts which thus perplexed him. At length, throwing himself upon his face to the ground, and spreading out his hands, he cried aloud,—“ Yes, there is, there must be a God : and he, no question, if I duly and earnestly seek it of him, will teach me not only how to know, but

how to serve him acceptably. He will be with me all my life here, and at the end of it will make me happy hereafter." His doubts now vanished, and he returned to his apartment in tranquillity ; but the recollection of the circumstance made him ever after commiserate persons in distress of mind on religious accounts ; to many of whom, in future life, his advice was eminently consolatory and instructive.

Such was his early proficiency, that before he was eight years old, it was found necessary to place him at a school, where his opening talents might be advantageously cultivated and improved. He was accordingly fixed at a house near Newbury, in Berkshire, under the superintendence of a Mr. Brooks, a man excellent for salutary discipline, and who introduced so extraordinary a way of teaching and living, that it is supposed the thoughtful child did, under his practice and instruction, receive the first impressions which disposed him to that regular, self-denying, and religious course of life, which he, after many years, formed, heightened, and illustrated in his own family, where it exhibited a noble figure of good old Christian discipline.

The rareness of this system, in this age of education, evinces the disrepute into which it has fallen ; but it may be questioned, whether any modern system has been discovered, which, either in theory or in practice, can be compared to it.

Modern education teaches children any thing but self-denial, and does any thing but keep them in their proper places. Self-confidence is substituted for self-control ; and conceit and forwardness, or cleverness, as it is called, are the base coin which parents are content to receive from their children, instead of those gems of the richest mine, humility, obedience, and subjection. But this order of things must work itself out ; for the present generation (except where grace performs what education does not effect, or where the kindness of the disposition counteracts the defect of the system,) will become, from its selfish organisation, a generation of tyrants ; and the next will be coerced into subjection, because their parents will love too well to have their own way, to allow their children to have theirs.

Mr. Brooks had lived and preached with much deserved popularity in London ; but he

forsook the noise of a great city to preside over the education of children in a country retirement. He took great pains to *teach* his children the Church Catechism. We may understand by this word *teach*, that he went into the pith of the matter. And here is another manifest advantage over the too general apathy which masters of modern schools shew to every thing like religious instruction. The Church Catechism is, *perhaps, said* by the pupils once a week, or perhaps not; but where is it *taught* in our modern academies? If the catechetical plan now so properly adopted in some of our parochial and Sunday schools be persevered in, academies of a higher stamp must soon be shamed into a scheme of religious instruction, or else our village boys and girls will be surpassing their superiors in life in the knowledge which “maketh wise unto salvation.” Mr. Brooks also taught his pupils the Psalter, the Epistles, and the Gospels, for which young Ferrar’s extraordinary memory served him to good purpose, and afforded him great consolation, when, many years after, he travelled and fell dangerously ill amongst those who take it for an act of heresy in a traveller to

carry about with him an English Bible. None of the pupils performed their tasks of this kind (or indeed of any kind) so constantly, so cheerfully, so easily, as young Ferrar. He comprehended and retained things so naturally, that whilst he conquered the greatest difficulties, he did not neglect the more easy, but not less useful, parts of education. Among other things he perfected himself in short-hand, an acquirement exceedingly useful to a clergyman. His masters were even proud of him, and gave him the commendation that he could do what he pleased: yet he had so little pride, and took so little pleasure in hearing himself commended, that he would weep and forsake his meals when they applauded him, and thus expose him to the envy of his school-fellows; so that if his other good qualities were gained by instruction and exercise, it seemed his modesty and humility were naturally his own.

In his thirteenth year Mr. Brooks accompanied his young scholar to Cambridge, in order to settle him in that university, declaring that "he was more than ripe for it," and alleging his loss of time if he stayed any longer at school. He placed him at Clare Hall, dis-

tinguished, as Dr. Turner records, for some eminent men in their times in their several faculties. Dr. Butler, for physic; Mr. Lake, who was afterwards advanced to be secretary of state; Mr. George Ruggle, for his skill in polite learning; and then, for their knowledge in divinity, there was Dutch Thompson (as he was called long after at Cambridge), Mr. Parkinson, and Dr. Austin Lindsell, afterwards Lord Bishop of Peterborough, and at last of Hereford; the latter of these was pleased to receive young Ferrar under his own tuition. He was entered only as a pensioner at first, that he might be the more strictly obliged to study and exercise; but soon afterwards, at the express and earnest desire of the fellows, he was admitted fellow-commoner, in order, as they said, that he might be their companion. His tutor used frequently to invite his learned friends to be present at trials of his memory, and other exercises of his extraordinary faculties; or, as he himself expressed it, “to see his inside as well as his outside:” and though great expectations were constantly excited on these occasions, yet he ever surpassed those expectations, whether in declaiming, or in dis-

puting, or in any other exhibition of memory, argument, or talent; although these trials were often such as the fellows thought quite unreasonable, urging that "it was a shame to spur a fleet horse, which already outwent the rider's desire, and won every race he put him to." He had no sooner taken his first degree in arts, which was in the year 1610, than the master of Clare Hall, and the other electors, urged this young fellow-commoner to try for a fellowship, and chose him, by unanimous consent, at the very next election. His literary acquisitions and personal character were by this time so conspicuous, that Dr. Lindsell was wont to exclaim, "may God keep him in his right mind! for if he should turn schismatic or heretic, he would make work for all the world; such a head! such power of argument! such a tongue! such a pen! such a memory withal he hath, with indefatigable pains, that all these joined together, I know not who would be able to contend with him!"

While he lived at college his life was remarkable for the strictest propriety and regularity in the best sense; he was, in fact, a fit example, not only for his equals in age, but also

for those who were much his superiors in years and experience. It was no slight indisposition that kept him from chapel when he heard the five o'clock bell (the hour at which the colleges assembled at prayer in those days); and his chamber might be known by the last candle put out at night, and the first lighted in the morning.

If his parts were excellent, his industry was remarkable; but his piety, for one of his age, was incomparable; and this circumstance made it the more illustrious in a youth not above twenty, that his fervours of devotion were well-tempered and admirably governed by judgment and discretion; qualities that he possessed in a more transcendent degree, his age considered, than any one of his other eminent virtues. Such good conduct in his affairs, with such undoubted integrity, gained him universal esteem, and a powerful influence over the hearts of all those who were his particular friends. But whilst such were the strength of his mind, the progress of its enlargement, and the deserved success of his talents, industry, and conduct, his constitution of body was not so happy. It was so tender, that the physicians



observed there were few of either sex of a more delicate frame than Ferrar. Nor did the air of Cambridge agree with him; therefore he frequently repaired from the university to Bourne, five miles from Cambridge, at the house of his sister, Mrs. Collett, a lady of excellent understanding, of much reading, and solid piety. There he began his labour of love to her children, whom he would catechise and exhort with a fatherly goodness. He was indeed to his dying day their spiritual friend and father. Dr. Butler directed him to starve away his aguish dispositions whenever they returned upon him—a prescription very agreeable to his patient, who was a great lover of abstinence; but in spite of his strict adherence to medical admonitions, either in physic or in diet, he sank so low under repeated attacks of ague, when he was of about seven years' standing in the university, that Dr. Butler recommended him, as the last remedy, to change the air of England, and to go beyond sea for the recovery of his health, and for a necessary relaxation from his incessant studies; pronouncing that nothing but travel could prolong his life, and even *that* pro-

bably not beyond his five or six and thirtieth year.

The event, however, proved the fallacy, not to say the presumption, of the doctor's augury. Ferrar's exact temperance, and regular, however austere, method of treating himself, overreached the almost marvellous faculty which Dr. Butler was supposed to possess in this kind of natural divination. In the present day, physicians of eminence venture not their reputation upon so unstable a ground of popularity.

His parents were extremely unwilling to part with him, and so were many of his fellow-collegians, who loved him as a brother; yet his tutor finally prevailed, bidding them all hope comfortably that they should see him again, not only improved in health and learning, but *grown in grace*; "a stock which," his biographer, Dr. Turner, adds, "few of our young travellers know how to increase."

A letter to his family on this occasion has been preserved, wherein he urges the importance of preparing for death. He exhorts his brothers and sisters to piety, unity, and love; consoles his parents with the thought, that if

he should soon be dead to them, he was yet alive to God; implores their forgiveness, if at any time he had displeased them, and adds — “It was God that gave me to you; and if he take me from you, be not only content, but joyful, that I am delivered from the vale of misery. This God, who hath kept me ever since I was born, will preserve me unto the end, and will give me grace to live in his faith, to die in his favour, to rest in his peace, to rise in his power, and to reign in his glory.” Ferrar was indeed (by grace given, cultivated, and improved,) so confirmed and established in goodness and truth, that there was no great danger of his being tainted, either with the vice or the superstition which he must needs encounter in his foreign tour.

He had already gone over many of the controversial works on the disputed points between the churches of England and Rome, and he had read several of the ancient fathers; so that he might be safely ventured among those who were adversaries of the truth, with no other governor or guide than his heavenly one.

## CHAPTER II.

It happened that the Lady Elizabeth, eldest daughter of King James I. and grandmother of George I., who had been recently married to Frederick, Count Palatine of the Rhine, was about to be conveyed to Holland, and so conducted home to the palatinate. She was the only surviving daughter of King James. At the time of her marriage with the Elector Palatine, afterwards King of Bohemia, she was in her sixteenth year. "If we may trust the painters," says the historian of the court of James I., "the symmetry of her features was heightened by that mixture of the sprightly and the soft in expression which lends to female beauty its most powerful fascination."

England had seen nothing equal to the splendour of her marriage, which was accomplished by a zealously Protestant party, at the head of which were Archbishop Abbot and Secretary Winwood. The king acquiesced, rather than gave his cordial approbation; the queen was decidedly hostile, and never, it is said,

could endure the sight of Winwood afterwards. She treated the Palatine himself with a haughtiness bordering on contempt, and called his wife by no other title than the "good-wife Palsgrave."

Arthur Wilson, in his "Life and Reign of James I.," speaking of the Princess Elizabeth's marriage, says, "while the archbishop was performing the ceremony, some coruscations and lightnings of joy appeared in her countenance, expressing more than an ordinary smile, being almost elated to a laughter, which could not clear the air of her fate, but was rather a forerunner of more sad and dire events."

"The Princess Sophia (mother of George I.) was the only surviving child of that only remaining daughter of James I., who, being married to the most zealous Protestant prince of the empire, became his partner in a series of distresses, personal and domestic, in which his committing himself on the cause of the Protestants of Bohemia, involved him and his family for nearly half a century." \*

During the King of Bohemia's struggles

\* See Miss Benger's Life of the Queen of Bohemia.

with his powerful Roman Catholic adversaries in the sacred cause of Protestantism, James I. was roused to *some activity*, but *only in negotiation*; the people were greatly excited and interested in behalf of a family so nearly allied to the blood-royal of England; and some accomplished diplomatists and negotiators were sent to Brussels, Italy, and the secondary states of Germany. But the Jesuits, who made themselves peculiarly busy in the contests between the Popish and the Protestant states, succeeded in firmly establishing their influence over all the princes of the house of Austria; and at length the great battle of Prague, in the month of November 1619, completed the ruin of the King of Bohemia, who fled with his family into Holland.

Miss Benger's "Life of the Queen of Bohemia," exhibits the piety, resignation, and many amiable traits in the domestic life of this princess during the fallen state of her husband's fortunes.

The whole chivalry of the English court was on fire to support the claims of the King of Bohemia, and to avenge the sufferings to which the queen was exposed. Her father alone re-

mained unmoved; he positively refused to depart from a strict neutrality. Some volunteer succours, consisting of picked men, and officered by the flower of the nobility and gentry, took up arms in this cause of the reformed religion, civil liberty, and the rights of a distressed queen and beauty; but their number was restrained by James to two thousand two hundred. This small force, commanded by the brave Sir Horace Vere, opposed but a trifling resistance to the army under Spinola, which pressed on, and invaded the palatinate. In 1621, the ban of the empire was published against the elector, and the execution of it committed to the Duke of Bavaria.

The Palatine, despoiled of his electoral dignity, was obliged to live with his numerous family in poverty and distress, either in Holland or at Sedan, with his uncle the Duke of Bouillon; and the new conquests of the Catholics throughout Germany were attended with persecutions of the Protestants. But the successful persecution of the King of Bohemia by the Catholic powers, though it distressed, and oppressed, and weakened, for a time, yet it did not crush nor destroy the Protestant interest,

or Protestant succession, of that family. The cause of Protestantism is the cause of truth, and *that shall prevail.*

The author of "George III., his Court, and Family," makes the following remark: "It is a curious fact connected with the Brunswick accession, that at the time of the gunpowder plot, it was intended to extirpate the whole royal family, *except the Princess Elizabeth*, afterwards Electress Palatine and Queen of Bohemia, who was to have been educated as a Catholic, for the maintenance of that religion. Yet from the issue of *that very lady* was the Brunswick family selected as the bulwark of the true Christian religion, to the exclusion of the male line. Thus the very person intended by the popish faction for the head of a popish dynasty, became, by the over-ruling hand of Providence, the wife of a Protestant prince, and the mother of a Protestant succession of princes down to the present day."

Dr. Scott, who, at the period before alluded to, was master of Clare Hall and sub-almoner to the king, advised Mr. Ferrar by all means to make one of her highness's retinue; whereupon, being first created master of arts (the university



conferring his degree upon him, by extraordinary favour, before the commencement), he took his leave of his beloved study in Clare Hall, and exchanged the student's gown for the apparel of a young courtier; not that he cared for a shining exterior, but merely falling into the fashion of the day, and assuming those garments which would be required by one who was now to have admittance to the courts of princes. Our Saviour himself, where he speaks of John the Baptist, whose dress, according to St. Matthew, was of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, does not seem to disallow soft raiment to those who are in kings' palaces. The doctor carried young Ferrar to court, presented him to the princess to kiss her hand, and then introduced him to the acquaintance of her suite. The royal fleet soon left England, and landed them at Flushing. No sooner had Ferrar set his foot on shore, than he was remarked by all about him as a close observer of men and things; he was noticed as one who spared no pains, or cost, to satisfy a laudable curiosity: he quickly acquired enough of the language of the country for the despatch of common affairs, having his Dutch book with

its English translation continually about him, to which he referred at the moment, as he had occasion.

Ferrar's mind was not so constituted that he could be satisfied merely with seeing sights, or measuring the height of towers ; he set himself laboriously to study the origin of the cities, the nature of the government, the manners, pursuits, and inclinations of the people in the several provinces, the strength of their fortresses, the magnitude of their arsenals and magazines, as well as every particular of their trade and commerce. He inquired into the revenues which supported the expense of their garrisons and their navies ; he examined the difference between their system of ship-building and ours ; he informed himself regarding their inventions and manufactories, in which that industrious people employed their lame and impotent,—affording even cripples the means of an honest livelihood.

He acquainted himself exactly with the doctrine and discipline of their church. He visited even the Brownists and Anabaptists at their conventicles, and compared their practice with their books. Above all, he was sedulous in

making a strict and diligent inquiry into the providential dealings of Almighty God with the nations, and the miracles of his mercy and justice in rewards and punishments, which are illustriously visible in the histories of every country; though many such rich and useful observations are hidden from us for want of inquiry, or, if investigated, are buried in oblivion, for want of being recorded.

Ferrar attended her highness at Middleburgh, to the Hague, and to Amsterdam. Her journey was a triumph; she was every where received with royal honours; and he, as an ornament of her train, was much caressed.

But when she began to bend her course direct to the palatinate, he, not intending to go that way, but declaring his design of passing through Westphalia into the upper parts of Germany, some of the noblest adventurers in that journey importuned him to accompany them to Heidelberg, where the Count Palatine held his court; assuring him, if he sought advancement by his travels, he stood fair to be appointed secretary to her highness, who had taken much notice of him, as well from her own observation, as from every body's good report.

But he answered, with his usual modesty, that he aimed at lower things, and was not qualified for such an appointment; so he kissed her royal hand, and she graciously bid him farewell, with kind wishes that he might be prosperous in his travels.

He set forward from Amsterdam to Ham-  
burgh, and arrived safely there. He was nobly entertained and welcomed by the English merchants, upon whom he had bills and letters of credit to supply him with whatever money he required; which liberality was abundantly repaid to his kind parents, by the high character his countrymen abroad gave of him in their letters to their correspondents in London. Here his strict adherence to the rules of temperance excited admiration, even where it failed to operate in the way of imitation.

The merchants, whose habits of life were probably luxurious, observed he would never taste wine or strong liquor, in order that he might never be urged to drink with them. At first they tempted him, but he had ever some ready and pleasing apology; and when they understood his temperance in sleep and diet, they ceased to importune him, and were constrained to admit "that he was in the right

way, which yet they confessed they could not hit." Even in these, his younger days, he possessed such conversational powers, that without the pedantry of assuming or imposing upon the company, he would lead the discourse to some useful consideration of virtue or vice; and would so delicately array the one, and so adroitly disrobe the other, that his conversation was no less pleasing than instructive; ever introducing some pertinent and remarkable passages from sacred or civil history in illustration of what he advanced, and thus charming his hearers by (to them) a new and profitable mode of conversation.

Passing through several of their cities, he came to Leipsic, where being in his own element again (for it was a university), he resolved to remain for some time. And here again his biographer gives a specimen of that unbounded thirst for knowledge which characterised this extraordinary young man.

He soon made inquiry for the ablest masters in various arts, "whom," the bishop says, "he would gain entirely, if gold and good words would gain them, to teach him their mystery." Among other arts which he learned abroad, was the skill of artificial memory.

The Germans were in those days considered exquisite mechanics; these, as well as their painters, weavers, dyers, and smiths, were much at Ferrar's lodgings; he had something to learn from all, and he could treat with the artisans in their proper terms: he could maintain a dialogue with an architect in his own phrases; he could talk with mariners in their sea-terms, knowing the name of every rope and pin in a ship. But as knowledge was his end and aim, he went beyond mere phraseology; and such, indeed, was his curiosity in all the fine parts of knowledge, that he made the great world his book.

He took notes of all in short-hand, when he was by himself, though his memory was so tenacious, and so remarkably faithful, that frequently he could recall circumstances of time and place, with the very words he heard, many years after they had occurred.

At Leipsic the learned professors and virtuosi courted his acquaintance. But his reputation drawing too many visitors, he retired to a neighbouring village, where he spent his time in reading the choicest German authors.

All men concluded that he aspired to some exalted situation in the state, by the vast pains

he used, and the scrupulous care he took of his time. His father, overjoyed at his great progress, wrote to him that "he should be allowed time enough, and money to spare;" therefore he charged him not to destroy himself by double diligence. After he had visited several courts of the dukes and princes of the empire, and carefully surveyed the imperial court and city, he bent his course from Vienna towards Italy.

Many German towns were at this time infected with the plague, so that when he came upon the frontiers of Italy, on the Venetian territory, he was compelled at one place to perform quarantine. This occurred during Lent: thus he was forced in a double manner to do penance, being under a restraint from company, as well as from animal food; though, in fact, neither of these things was a painful constraint to one whose mind had such transcendent resources within itself, and whose appetites were always in an habitual state of mortification. He employed this season of solitude to good purpose; he had leisure now to call in his thoughts, to revise his notes, and to reduce his observations into method. His manner of life was this: In the morning he went up into

a neighbouring mountain, where there grew an abundance of wild thyme and rosemary ; there, with a book or two, and with God, whom he met at every turn in the closest walks of his mind, having spent the day in reading, meditation, and prayer, he came down in the evening to an early supper, his only set meal, of fish. He omitted not his exercises of devotion, morning, evening, and at midnight, during his travels ; for to serve and to please God was the delight of his soul. He needed not many books, for he was his own concordance ; and as to the New Testament, he had it in a manner without book ; and when he had not time and place to kneel in prayer, he made the lowest prostrations of his spirit. One remarkable deliverance, among many, which the providence of God vouchsafed him in Italy, must not be omitted. He was riding over some dangerous and narrow passes of the Alps ; his guide was a little way before him ; when, from the side of a hill between him and his guide, an ass appeared, laden with a huge piece of timber across her back, running down the hill towards him : the road was extremely narrow, with perpendicular heights on one side, and a fearful precipitous



descent on the other. His guide, not hearing the tread of Ferrar's mule, looked back, and seeing the ass thus laden and approaching him, cried out, "O Lord God! the man is lost, if he had a hundred lives!" Hearing the guide's voice, he raised his eyes, and beheld his danger. He saw the ass coming down rapidly upon him, so that the timber, lying athwart, must, he thought, of necessity precipitate him and his mule into the valley beneath. To turn, there was not time, even if turning could avert the peril: he therefore fervently called upon God to preserve him, and, by his omnipotent power, to find some means of deliverance. At the moment the ass came upon him, she tripped, and with bowing, the timber, by a sudden and violent motion, so swayed from him, that he, stopping his mule, and the ass passing quietly by, the log only brushed his side. Immediately alighting, and falling flat on his face, he made his most humble and hearty acknowledgments to Almighty God for his preservation; while his guide and the owner of the ass, who by this time had arrived, stood crossing themselves, and exclaiming, "A miracle! a miracle!"

## CHAPTER III.

WE next find our traveller at Padua, where the genius of the place presented him with a fair opportunity, and his own infirm constitution gave him frequent occasion, to apply himself diligently to the study of physic; in which, by a rapid proficiency, he gained the friendship and assistance of the most excellent men in that university. Here, indeed, as at Leipsic, he was (for his own comfort and advantage) too well known, and his society too much sought.

And besides the Paduans, he was oppressed by frequent visits from the English, whose character abroad is to seek too assiduously the society and conversation of their own countrymen: he therefore retired from the city, sometimes ten, twenty, thirty, or forty miles into the country, frequently changing his residence, and then returning for three weeks or a month to Padua, or to Venice, where he was received and treated in an obliging manner by Sir Dud-

ley Carleton, at that time the English ambassador. Once during his stay at Padua he was attacked by a violent fit of illness: his physicians were his particular acquaintance; and as the case approached to a crisis, they had a consultation in his chamber.

Bleeding was determined upon as the last remedy; to which he was ready to submit, though reasoning the case with them, he concluded it would hasten his end; when a very old physician, who came to him in pure kindness, and had been silent before, protested he was his own best physician, and prevailed upon them to defer the bleeding. Next morning there appeared some favourable symptoms; and within three or four days, they were perfectly of opinion, that had they opened a vein, he had infallibly died. The good old physician, transported with joy to have been, under God, his preserver, came daily, and sat whole hours with him whilst he kept his chamber, admiring the excellency of his parts, as well intellectual as moral.

Ferrar, as an ardent student in history, had gone deep into the lore of Rome and her antiquities; he had also read with interest the best

accounts given in those days of modern Rome : if this study had produced in him the wish that it excited in St. Augustine, to have seen her ancient glory, it gave him also an anxious desire to see her modern policy. But conferring with some persons who were well acquainted with the English college there, and who had recently come from thence, he was assured that the Jesuits were not ignorant of his name or talents ; that they were, in the spirit of inquisitorial jealousy, watchful over his movements on the continent ; that they had a description of his person, as well as his character ; and they concluded he came abroad upon some great design inimical perhaps to the doctrines of their sect, or subversive of the religion of Rome.

Rome was not, in the early part of the seventeenth century, so safe a place for Protestants as it is now in the nineteenth. Ferrar therefore, bent on visiting the papal city, stole away from Padua, travelled very privately on foot, and so arranged his progress that he arrived at Rome on Monday, in the great holy week before Easter-day.

He changed his lodging every night, and

stayed there but ten days, which he husbanded so advantageously, as to be enabled to take a view of every thing remarkable.

It is to be lamented that little detail of any interest or importance can be afforded of his visit to Rome. It would have been highly interesting to have had a view of the reflections of such a mind as Ferrar's upon a place and a subject on which modern travellers of much less power of intellect, depth of research, or faculty of observation, delight to expatiate; and we must regret that a Christian, a scholar, and a gentleman,—a man of diligent research and acute observation, should have visited Rome in the early part of the seventeenth century, without, as far as we are able to discover, gratifying the world by a transcript of his reflections on such a visit.

His biographer, Dr. Turner, mentions one curious circumstance which happened to our traveller at Rome. He had unadvisedly pressed into a gallery through which the Pope was passing by in state, when all the people fell on their knees to beg his indulgence and blessing before Easter. Though he was too sensible a traveller to have scrupled at such com-

pliments as are usually paid to the Pope as a temporal prince, yet this good Protestant was so surprised by the suddenness of the encounter, that he remained standing. One of the Swiss guards seeing him stand amazed amidst the kneeling throng, and taking him perhaps for a Dutchman, ignorant of the customs of Rome, came up to him, as if to preserve him from the consequences of his unintentional disrespect, and clapping his heavy hand upon his shoulder, whispered softly in his ear in the Dutch language, "Down, simpleton, down!" When the Pope was gone by, the Swiss took off his hand from his neck, got up, and passed away in the throng; but Ferrar, whilst he felt the kind intention of the man, felt also the effects of his roughness for a week after, nor would he thrust himself into such places of danger any more.

And now, intending to take leave of Italy, he repaired to Marseilles, designing thence to go by sea to Spain. But at Marseilles he met with an interruption. There he was again seized by a fever, even more terrible than that by which he was attacked at Padua. His physician and his landlord took him for a knight

of Malta (as they afterwards told him, and then he undeceived them). They had so mistaken him, on account of one of the little crosses usually worn by those knights, which they had discovered among other of his curiosities, and which, in fact, had been presented to him by one of the knights of that order when he was among them. The physician confidently supposed him to be his countryman (for he spoke perfect Italian), and wondered at his proficiency and learned discoveries in the medical science, which he thought extraordinary for a young knight of Malta.

At the beginning of his indisposition, he despatched a letter to his dear friend, Mr. Garton, an English gentleman whom he had left at Venice, earnestly entreating him to take a charitable voyage to visit a sick friend, in a place where he was perfectly a stranger; where he was obliged to be “his own priest, his own book, and was able to endure no light but from his own memory;” therefore he prayed him to come immediately, if he desired to see him alive; or, if he should be dead on his arrival, to procure him some corner for Christian burial.

His fever grew so high, and his disease so acute, that it was evident he must either mend or die speedily. His doctor apprehended the latter result as inevitable; and one evening he took, as he was fully persuaded, his final leave of him. But it pleased God, whom Ferrar night and day invoked with holy fervour, and with no less resignation to his divine will, to send him a sound and refreshing sleep,—a sleep accompanied by so extraordinary a turn in his disorder, and succeeded by a morning so comfortable, that his physician pronounced it to be a change preternatural, and little less than supernatural; and concluded that his young and amiable patient was, in an especial manner, under the care of the Divine Providence. To increase Ferrar's thankfulness (and for which blessing he never ceased to pour out his heart in praises to his Almighty Deliverer), his friend Mr. Garton arrived on that very day. The meeting of these friends was touching. Garton wept over Ferrar with tears of sympathy for his sufferings, and gratitude for his preservation, and never parted from him till his perfect recovery.

This young gentleman had fled from England



to Italy, having unhappily killed his antagonist in a duel. At Padua he was noted as a stranger of distressing habits of melancholy. There, however, in a happy hour for him, he fell, apparently by chance, into company with Mr. Ferrar, and was so much charmed with his wisdom, worth, and piety, that, after a time, he poured out his whole heart to him, confessing with penitential sorrow the cause of his dejection. Ferrar knew how to administer the mercies of the Gospel to his case and conscience; and, by God's grace, they were applied with such efficacy, that the victim of remorse and despair yielded at length to the arguments of the Christian, and began to take comfort and feel hope. Garton was never so happy as in the company of Ferrar; his counsels were balm to a wounded conscience; and thenceforward he loved and esteemed him beyond every earthly being.

Soon after his restoration to health, Ferrar embarked in a small English vessel of twelve guns, bound from Marseilles to a port of Spain. They sailed, but had not proceeded far on their voyage before they were chased by a Turkish pirate; and though the wind was

not very favourable to the pirate-vessel, yet she gained upon them. The sailors of the English vessel were seized with a panic at the sight of their approaching enemy: they trembled at the sure expectation of speedy captivity or death. The master and the mate alone had the heart to think of resistance; but the crew were inclined to strike sail and yield, without an attempt at defence. Our traveller stood upon the deck, heard all, and said nothing, until the master of the vessel, approaching him, asked his opinion; “For,” said he, “this young gentleman has a life to lose as well as we: let us hear what he thinks of it.” Then this young Christian worthy animated them all with such words as David used;—“Let us fall into the hands of God,” he said, “and not into the hands of men; and especially not into the hands of men who have cast off all humanity.” Then he persuaded them to fight manfully, terrifying the fearful with vehement and appalling representations of the chains and stripes they would endure in slavery; rousing the most phlegmatic among them by stories of our ancestors,—how they lorded it over the sea, and how they were re-

nowned over all for their naval victories. And thus, his words, his energy, and his eloquence, had such an effect upon them, that they all, as one man, prepared for action, and, together with himself, made ready to engage the enemy.

In the meantime, the Turk, who had been striving to get the weather-gage, approached, and was ready to hail them. The English resolved to use the advantage of the wind whilst they had it, and to give their assailants a broad-side. The master was actually giving the command to that effect, when the Turkish vessel suddenly fell off, and steered away with all the sail she could make, to the inexpressible joy and wonder of the English, until they perceived her departure accounted for by the appearance to leeward of a larger vessel, and, probably, a better booty, which the Turk was unwilling to lose; for they saw him gaining apace upon her.

They now thanked God, and their gallant passenger for his courage and conduct; and, discerning his excellent skill in maritime affairs, they would hardly believe that he had not been some famous "captain of the sea," in the Venetian service against the Turks, and that he

had "fought in famous battles." Being landed safely at a port of Spain, he travelled to Madrid. On his arrival there, his first object of solicitude was the pecuniary means by which he could carry his future plans of travel into execution ; and he, accordingly, with some anxiety, inquired among the English merchants there for the expected remittances. He, for reasons which his biographer does not mention, concealed his own name in this inquiry, and *spoke of Ferrar as his friend.*

A reason may perhaps be discovered for the great caution manifested by Mr. Ferrar, during his stay at Madrid, in concealing his real name and character ; and a reason may be considered the more necessary, when it is remembered that his caution amounted almost to misrepresentation ; at least there was something equivocal, when he "spoke of Ferrar as his friend."

The fact appears to be, that at the time of his visit to Madrid, William Cecil, who bore the title of Lord Roos in right of his mother, and was grandson of the Earl of Exeter, was residing in the capital of Spain in a diplomatic situation.

This nobleman visited Rome in the year 1607, accompanied by his tutor, Mr. Mole, and there he apostatised from Protestantism, and embraced the faith of the Romish church. He added persecution to apostacy, and his own tutor became the victim of his atrocious delinquency. “ Mr. Mole was seized upon by the Inquisition, on a charge of circulating heretical books, on the information, as was believed, of his perfidious pupil. All efforts for his release proved fruitless, and at the end of thirty years he died a prisoner.”\* He was a prisoner, therefore, during Ferrar’s short stay at Rome. But the presence and influence of such a person at Madrid as Lord Roos might well justify the strictest caution and secrecy on the part of Ferrar, whose name, talents, and *Protestantism*, we have already seen, were well known at Rome (having excited the vigilance and jealousy of the English bigots then at the papal city), and were, probably, not unheard of at Madrid. The man who could sacrifice his own tutor, would not have scrupled to denounce any other known friend of the reformed

\* Miss Aikin’s Memoirs of the Court of James I.

religion, and especially one of the extraordinary acquirements of Ferrar. Hence may we see a strong motive for that extreme caution manifested by him at the capital of Spain.

But to return to Ferrar. His father, in fact, supposing he could not reach Madrid so soon, had remitted him no money thither. The greater part of the supplies he had brought from Marseilles were spent; and for the first time he found himself a stranger, in a strange land, without a known friend, and with an almost exhausted purse. His countrymen, however, were soon so charmed with his winning behaviour, and his fascinating and sensible discourse, though he still thought not fit to tell them who he was, that they frankly offered him a very considerable sum, which he as generously refused. But while he was deliberating how to shape his affairs, and whither to bend his course from Madrid, so as to take an extensive survey of Spain, and then to return through France to England, tidings of an unexpected nature reached him.

He received intimation, through an indirect channel, that his family were involved in great difficulties; and that such was the intricacy of

their embarrassments, that no one but himself was likely to extricate them, and preserve them from ruin. This intelligence at once fixed his determination ; he instantly abandoned his plan of visiting France. Affection and sympathy gave wings to duty ; and resolving, as Dr. Turner says, “ to have gone homeward as straight as an angel could lay a line, had it been in his power,” he determined to press forward to St. Sebastian’s, and there take shipping for England.

## CHAPTER IV.

FERRAR at once sold some small jewels to supply his present necessity, and then set off on foot, with a rich rapier in his hand, and dressed (as the Spaniards call it) *en cuerpo*—in doublet and hose. He chose this way of travelling in Spain, (a country not very hospitable to strangers, and especially to known Protestants and unprotected,) not for economy only, though that indeed was necessary, for his stock of money was very low, but that he might pass the more unsuspected and unquestioned. Those who have witnessed the demoralising effects of the wars of this century, well know the insecurity of travelling even at the present day in Spain, and will therefore conceive how fraught with danger was the enterprise undertaken by Ferrar, at a period when similar causes had operated upon the ill-governed and unenlightened children of that bigoted soil. He was a stranger, on foot, alone, venturing to tread the mazes of the mountain-paths, or



to toil along the still more perilous public road from Madrid to St. Sebastian's, a distance of above two hundred miles. He was not ignorant of the hazard and peril of the undertaking. In his progress to Madrid he must have frequently encountered the startling evidence of guilt and wrong, in those little stone or wooden crosses, so commonly erected in Spain, where a murdered body has been found ; fearfully reminding the defenceless wayfarer that a deed of darkness has been done, and that its lawless perpetrator is perhaps not only undiscovered, but at hand. His journey, however, was a journey of piety ; it was the result of a strong sense of duty, acting upon a mind deeply influenced by religious principles ; and he was therefore not to be deterred from the performance of it by pusillanimous apprehensions.

The same faith that animated the patriarch, who knew not whither he was to go, fortified the soul of Ferrar, in venturing forth to meet with known and certain dangers : he was not alone, for his Father was with him. He committed himself and his enterprise to the providential care of Him, who had already been, in an especial manner, his protector, his re-

storer, and his guide. We may, without any undue stretch of fancy, suppose that Ferrar took up the language of the Psalmist, which, from his youth, was so familiar to him, and said, "I will trust, and not be afraid." He remembered, perhaps, his almost miraculous escape at the passes of the Alps; he recollected his restoration from the verge of the grave at Padua and Marseilles; he had not forgotten the remarkable interposition of Providence, in delivering him and those that were with him from the prospect of Turkish slavery, or death; and satisfied that he was in the way of duty, although manifestly also in the way of danger, he commended his cause and his person to Him whose past mercies he had abundantly experienced, and confidently trusted in him for future aid. "The Lord is my light and my salvation," might Ferrar say, in the language of David; "whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" "Thou art my rock and my fortress, therefore for thy name's sake lead me and guide me." "Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of

deliverance.” “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.” With the songs of the sweet Psalmist of Israel on his lips, and a sure hope of God’s help and blessing in his heart, Ferrar turned his back upon the capital of Spain.

And now let us follow him in his adventurous career, as closely at least as we are acquainted with the detail of his journey, of which the materials are indeed very scanty. To avoid observation, as well as from prudential motives of economy, he was a pedestrian; and in all places where he thought fit to enter into discourse, either with his hosts or the persons he met or occasionally joined on his journey, he expressed an inquisitive interest about the state of the war in Flanders; which real or feigned anxiety gave rise to the opinion, that he was a young Italian gentleman, going towards Flanders to serve under the Marquis Spinola, the great commander, in those parts, for the King of Spain. At one little town the governor was enamoured with the beauty of Ferrar’s sword, and asked it of him. He, however, refused it, saying, that a man of courage ought no more to part with his sword than with

his life. But, not disheartened by this refusal, the governor urged him to the surrender of it : upon which he replied wisely and resolutely, that voluntarily he would not give it up ; and that if it were taken from him by violence, he should find friends at court that would avenge his wrong, and enforce restitution. Upon this, some bystanders concluded, by his free speech and brave deportment, that he was some extraordinary person incognito, and therefore advised the governor to press him no further on this point. “ Well, sir,” said the Spaniard (whom Dr. Turner calls “ a sharking Hector”), “ I did this only to try you : I see you love your arms, which, indeed, is soldierlike. I perceive you are for the Flemish wars, under your countryman, Spinola ;” and so dismissed him, to proceed on his wearisome journey.

One day, travelling entirely alone, and meeting nobody, he was obliged to guess at his way by certain landmarks which had been given him where he lodged the preceding night. Towards evening he perceived his way, as he supposed it, led him to the summit of a lofty hill, and ascending it with much pain and labour, he saw a considerable circuit of ground,

flanked and bulwarked on every side with steep rocks, nor could he discern any path leading out of it. At this he was in a sad perplexity, suspecting that he had altogether mistaken the hill that he should ascend, and apprehending that his lodging that night must be on no other couch than the bare earth, and with no other canopy than the starry heavens. But Ferrar was a man of prayer. He had found also, that the God whom he worshipped was a hearer and answerer of prayer. He had experienced this : he had found prayer a channel of grace for conveying and deriving blessings from “ God into our own bosoms, and so a mean of worship, whereby we are to do homage to God, and give him the glory of his power.” Ferrar knew that prayer is an humble appeal from our “ impotency to God’s omnipotence ;” and in this dilemma (as might be expected from a person habitually prayerful), we are told that he besought God to direct and help him. “ Faith uses her wings of prayer to fly to heaven ; but she uses also her feet of duty, obedience, and diligence, with which she walks and bestirs herself on earth.” Ferrar, therefore, seconded his prayers with his endeavours ;

and, as it was too late to retrace his steps, he sought and looked in every quarter for some way or means of direction. At length he perceived a large black hog emerging from between two rocks : he resolved at once to make this animal his guide, hoping it might be of the domestic kind, and that its course might lead to some habitation. The hog moved on swiftly, and he marked it descend on the farther end of the mountain. Arriving at the spot where it disappeared, he discovered an aperture in a rock, evidently the work of man, with a rude window to admit light. He entered, and found himself in a winding passage cut out in the rock, which grew more and more dark as he advanced. Presently he perceived a glimmering of light again, and soon heard the voices of persons in conversation. On opening a door, with which this gloomy passage terminated, he found himself in a *venta*, as the Spaniards call it, which is one of those wretched inns here and there dispersed throughout Spain for the reception of travellers. He advanced, and saluted his host, who greatly wondered how he had discovered an approach to the house, if not secret, at least unfrequented

by travellers, and also expressed astonishment at Ferrar's being alone. He quickly perceived, by some unequivocal tokens, that his lot for the night had fallen into very bad company; but there was now no retreating. Therefore, complaining, as he had reason to do, of the want of rest and sleep, he laid himself down upon a bench, grasping his rapier in his hand. Hardly had he composed himself, when two ruffians came roaring into the room with an immodest woman. One of these men affronted the female, the other protected her. Thus they feigned a quarrel: they flourished in the air with their swords, and the weaker called upon him on the bench to rise and help him. Ferrar, however, with consummate presence of mind, feigned himself during this scene in a profound sleep: he was aware they only wished to engage him in a brawl, for a pretence to assassinate him with the law on their side; but having to deal with counterfeits, he kept clear of interference. At last the mock duel was at an end, through the host's mediation; and it pleased God to restrain these evil spirits from farther violence, and he heard no more of them. Before daylight he was stirring; and

having stolen away from this den of danger, the first ray of the rising sun found him again pursuing his arduous 'course towards St. Sebastian's. After a tedious and wearisome journey he arrived there, and was constrained to remain some time for a fair wind. The English merchants there, as every where else, were friendly and obliging to their unknown countryman, whom they discerned to be a gentleman of great worth and experience. They pressed him day after day to command their purses; neither was he scrupulous in acknowledging that his own was at a low ebb. In the end he was content to accept the loan of about ten pounds English, and no more; for he knew that there is sometimes as much courtesy and good nature in receiving a kindness, as in bestowing one. At length the wind came fair, and he was accompanied aboard ship by several of his new acquaintance, who, taking a kind leave of him, with earnest wishes for his safety, beheld his departure. His voyage was propitious; and after a few days he arrived safely at Dover, where, leaping on shore, he fell on his face upon his mother earth, and poured out fervent thanksgivings to God, his heavenly Father, for



so many dangers overcome by sea and land, and for restoring him safe and sound to his native country. From Dover he hastened to London; nor can it be supposed that his affectionate heart was insensible to those fluctuations of hope and fear which are excited on the approach to home after a long absence.

This feeling would become more and more intense in Ferrar as he came near the city of his birth, and the habitation of his honoured parents.

However time may seem to linger, when expectation would urge it on, yet the period when our fears are to be resolved into mournful certainty, or our hopes into joyful reality, will arrive, and that speedily. On Ferrar's arrival in London, he flew to his father's house; the door was invitingly open—he rushed into the well-known apartment, and in a moment was at his father's feet, who, seeing a man whom he did not know, in a Spanish garb, kneeling and begging his blessing, demanded who he was; but when Ferrar named himself, the good old man, who dreamed not of his coming, raised him with transports of joy from his feet to his bosom, and felt and expressed, as far as

words could express, the delight of an affectionate father, at the unexpected return of a deservedly beloved son. By his many friends he was received with every mark of cordial regard. Thus, after upwards of five years' unwearied travel of body and exercise of mind, Ferrar returned home with an improved constitution, with an increased knowledge of men and manners, with a mind additionally stored with useful information, and a heart devoted to the service of God and the good of man.

It is almost impossible not to be struck by the various providential deliverances which had attended Ferrar, during his absence from his native country. The reflective reader will trace in them the merciful dealings of Omnipotence, upholding and preserving him for a future sphere of ordained usefulness. Each deliverance was in itself a wonder. In one instance (at the Alps), by the apparently accidental and trivial circumstance of an *animal tripping*, the destruction, which appeared instant and inevitable, was averted ! In another case, a mode of medical treatment, suggested by the patient himself, and approved by one, in opposition to a body of physicians, preserved his

life. A third example of providential deliverance may be stated, in that remarkable turn of his disorder at Marseilles, which in one night produced so entire and decided a change in the symptoms of expected dissolution, that the physician pronounced it to be preternatural. Again, in the encounter with the Turkish pirate, a few minutes more would have involved the two vessels in a desperate, deadly, and unequal engagement, when, in a moment, a richer booty hove in sight, and drew off the unhallowed marauder from his fell purpose. The same providential care accompanied him through his hazardous expedition from Madrid to St. Sebastian's : he passed along secure amidst innumerable dangers ; it restrained the hands of rapine and murder in the lone *venta*, where he had taken refuge for a night ; it was still with him in his " path," and in " all his ways ;" it hovered round his person when again he launched upon the world of waters, and conducted him in safety to his home. In these things the invisible hand of providential Omnipotence was extended. " If God be with us, who shall be against us ?" If the sparrow fall not, when Providence upholds it, how

much more does man participate in the wonders of that attribute ! Man, predestined to future usefulness among the flock of the Saviour's redeemed people on earth, and to the blessedness of the saints in heaven, experiences that at every turn of his mortal pilgrimage, " loving-kindness and tender mercy " (although, perhaps, unobserved and unheeded at the time,) ever prevent and follow him ; and which, afterwards, are retrospectively traced, with admiring love and overwhelming gratitude.

If, in contemplating the escapes of our traveller, reflection should bring to the mind of any reader the remembrance of mercies received, or deliverances wrought, even though unequal in number or magnitude to those of Ferrar, let a sense of them operate in begetting gratitude and unreserved self-dedication to Him " whose mercy endureth for ever,"—who never " leaves nor forsakes " the subjects of his covenant-mercy in Christ, and who will assuredly guide his believing people safely through the water and the wilderness, to those peaceful shores, and that prepared mansion, where a door is open for their admission, and a reconciled Father is waiting their approach ; where

friendly angels shall rejoice at their arrival, and where not a single wave of trouble shall disturb them any more for ever.

Had Ferrar followed the leadings of his inclination at this time, they would have conducted him back to his cell at Clare-hall : but a destiny of greater activity awaited him ; he had not been reserved for a life merely studious or contemplative ; and his aged parents laid their affectionate commands upon him, to fix with them on the great theatre of England—the city of London ; and unless the reader is by this time wearied of the history of Nicholas Ferrar, he may learn, in the next chapter, what part he had to play, and how he performed it.

## CHAPTER V.

OLD Mr. Ferrar having been intimate with those brave men and gallant sailors, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Francis Drake, was a great lover and encourager of foreign plantations, and was himself one of the most early adventurers in that of Virginia and the Somer Islands; a design, it must be acknowledged, great and worthy in its kind. It was very generally embraced and undertaken by our nobility, gentry, clergy, and by the city of London.

It was considered a project for the common good, for the employment of unsettled people, for estates to younger brothers, and for the supply of those commodities which we were obliged to fetch from other countries at extraordinarily high rates; but, above all, for the conversion of the rude and miserable savages to the Christian faith. Many of the bishops and dignified clergy engaged in this affair with an extraordinary zeal for the propagation of

the Gospel, and so to wipe off that aspersion thrown upon the Church of England by the Church of Rome, “ that she converts no believers abroad.”

It may be urged, that, for some time after the Reformation, there was more than enough for the ministers of the Establishment to do at home ; but however zealous the clergy may have been, at the time of the colonisation of Virginia, for the propagation of the reformed religion abroad, it must nevertheless be acknowledged, that at a subsequent period of our history, and even down almost to the commencement of the present century, a Laodicean spirit on the subject of Christian missions had manifested itself in our Church, which rendered the Archbishop of Cambray’s observation too truly applicable.

Now we are indeed redeeming ourselves from the guilty apathy which had benumbed the Church and its members, and a little more life is shewing itself in the awfully neglected duty of attempting the evangelisation of the dark parts of the earth. The authentic records of missionary effort, whilst they give abundant proof of the Divine blessing which has attended

the exertions of our missionaries, exhibit also the vast magnitude of the field ripe for the harvest, and the comparative fewness of the labourers in it. Let a candid—let a scriptural inquiry be made on this point of overwhelming interest, and then let the inquirer, whether churchman or layman, ask himself,—“ How *dare* I refuse my co-operation ? ”

Dr. Turner observes, in reference to the missionary efforts of the Romanists in the sixteenth century, that though the Jesuits had great “ trading ” on the vast continent of Mexico, yet Virginia was safe enough from any such charitable attempt of those “ merchants ; ” for where there are no mines of silver or gold,” he adds, “ *there* we seldom hear ” that they have compassed the sea and land “ to make their proselytes.”

Sir Edwin Sandys was an early and active manager of the Virginian affair, and treasurer to the company. With this gentleman Nicholas Ferrar contracted, within two months of his return, so intimate a friendship, that they were seldom asunder.

Sir Edwin thought it no less his honour and happiness to have been a pupil of the judi-



cious Hooker, than to have been son of the Archbishop of York. The archbishop was one of the translators of the Bible of 1565. His son Edwin was the author of a tract, entitled "*Europæ Speculum*." He was knighted by James I., by whom he was employed in many public affairs. Mr. Ferrar's biographer describes him as a man of judgment and piety. "He was," he says, "indeed one of the glories and blessings of his times."

Old Mr. Ferrar lent his great parlour and hall for the weekly meetings of the governors of the Virginia Company, and was much rejoiced to see his son as heartily affording his assistance, as Sir Edwin readily accepting it, in this great work. Nay, his care and charity were not confined to Virginia, for he and his brother, John Ferrar, freely bestowed two shares of land they had in the Bermudas for the maintenance of a free school there, whither they also sent a liberal supply of Bibles and Psalters for the children. He was soon made known to above twenty peers of the realm, who were engaged as adventurers in this design; but he was received with open arms by Lord Southampton, the most generous promoter of the enterprise.

This nobleman was of a disposition ill adapted to the servility and base intrigue which too much prevailed in the court and cabinet of King James ; hence he obtained no share of political power, and was chosen treasurer of the Virginian Company, contrary to the wishes of the monarch ; and both in this station, which was one of considerable weight and influence, and in his place in parliament, shewed himself an opponent of the measures of the court. But what was still more bold, he actually “ rebuked the Lord Marquis of Buckingham, with some passion and acrimony, for *speaking often to the same thing* in the House, and *out of order*.” The parliament was scarcely adjourned, when the offended favourite prevailed upon the king to commit Lord Southampton to private custody in the house of Dr. Williams (*Lord High Chancellor of England and Bishop of Lincoln ! \**), and afterwards to confine him to his own seat at Tichfield,

\* It is recorded by Sir S. D'Ewes, in a MS. “ Life of Himself,” in the British Museum, that when the king received the great seal from the officers who were sent to demand it of Bacon, he had been overheard to say, “ Now, by my *soul*, I am pained at the heart where to bestow this ; for, as for *lawyers*, I think they be all

under the inspection of Sir William Parkhurst.

Lord Southampton expostulated with Dr. Williams in a spirited letter, who, in his turn, wrote to the Duke of Buckingham, recommending that the earl should be liberated. The implacable Buckingham threatened to make it a Star-chamber matter. The terror of such a process may afford some palliation for the submissions which high-minded persons sometimes made to escape its tyranny. The extent of the concessions which Lord Southampton made (if he made any), the editor cannot state; he was, however, liberated; but, disgusted with the state of things at home, he accepted the command of an English regiment raised for the Dutch service, and fell a victim, together with his eldest son, to an epidemical disease which broke out among the troops at Bergen-op-Zoom.

Mr. Nicholas Ferrar was invariably named as one in all committees; he had become the knaves." "Which, it seemeth," adds the narrator, "that his Majesty spake at that time, to prepare a way to bestow it on a clergyman, as *the Marquis of Buckingham had intended.*"

secretary of the society to all intents and purposes, except in taking fees, which he left entirely to the person who had the title of secretary, but who was little more than his amanuensis.

The letters of instruction to the colony were drawn up by Ferrar : he had the framing and ordering of all matters, either of government, or for the improvement of the country by staple commodities.

He treated with the civilians, common lawyers, and divines, destined for the colony. One of the latter was a son of Dr. William Whitaker, the celebrated controversialist and Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, whose picture Cardinal Bellarmine placed in his study, because, as he said, " though a heretic and an adversary, he was the most learned he had ever read." Although Dr. Whitaker's son had competent church preferment in the north of England, he quitted it and his country to assist as a preacher of the Gospel in Virginia, and obtained, for his labours in that colony, the name of " the apostle of Virginia."

Ferrar also managed the victualling and equipment of their ships. In short, if reading,

considering, and advising, availed to make him master of his business, he studied it with such unwearied industry, that he alone, as the tradesmen and seamen acknowledged, could direct all the officers; so that, before he was aware of it, this extraordinary young man had made himself eminently useful to distant parts of the new world. He was engaged in several very important negotiations connected with the Virginian scheme, which are too long to be inserted here, but in all which he acquired the highest reputation for prudence, integrity, application, and ability.

During this time, *two offers*, of a very opposite nature, but such as might have shaken many a less decided character, did in vain tempt this Christian hero to a little more love of the world.

*One* was the mathematical lectureship in Gresham College, which, Mr. Briggs being about to vacate for the Savilian professor's chair at Oxford, he importunately recommended Mr. Ferrar to the Company of Mercers, assuring them that his friend, whom he wished to see his successor, was excellently well qualified for that situation, and advised

them, upon any terms, to fix him in the situation, even though they should purchase him by a considerable augmentation of salary. But he humbly refused the offer, alleging that he had “other intentions and aims, if it pleased God to ripen them for a happy issue.” “It was no great wonder,” his right reverend biographer remarks, “that *he* would not make geometry his mistress, who at the same time declined *another and a nobler offer*, which was a very agreeable person offered to him for *a wife*, and a great fortune withal.”

This lady was the only child and heiress of a rich merchant, one of the Virginian Company, who courted and wooed him to take her and ten thousand pounds with her; but Ferrar argued playfully and pleasantly with her father, that he was not worthy to enter into the honourable estate of matrimony with so much wealth. The father still enforced it, professing the great love *he* had for him, and the happiness he should derive from seeing such a man the husband of his daughter. This excess of kindness then extorted from him a declaration, that his resolution was “not to marry at all;” for though he knew the world and the Church too

well to speak or think dishonourably of marriage, yet was he determined to deny himself any thing that might obstruct his future great design of retirement.

The good merchant appeared extremely perplexed, and declared that if that were his resolution, he should take his refusal the more patiently, and expressed much affection for him ever after.

The Virginian Company was not without enemies, and those too amongst persons of rank and influence. A very powerful and determined opponent of the association was Lionel Cranfield, earl of Middlesex, who abetted and encouraged certain accusations against the society. When the council had met to deliberate upon the alleged charges, the deputy, Mr. Ferrar, was commanded to come to the upper end of the table. Then the accusers of the company desired of the lords, that one of the clerks should read certain letters and instructions; which, being done, the lords looked upon one another with evident marks of astonishment, observing that there was nothing dangerous in those papers, but, on the contrary, matter of high commendation.

“Point out,” said one, “where is the fault in these instructions—for my own part I cannot see any.” The enemies of the company prayed their lordships to hear them *all* read, and it would soon appear where the fault lay. “Yes, yes,” said the Lord-Treasurer Cranfield, with vehemence, “read on, read on, we shall anon find them.” So they persisted to read; and so much patience had they, or rather so much pleasure, that many declared their time was well spent. All the documents being read, and nothing appearing disadvantageous to the company, but, on the contrary, much to their credit and honour, the Marquis of Hamilton stood up and said there was one letter that he desired might be read over again, on which he wished to make a few observations; which being accordingly done, he said, “Well, my lords, we have spent many hours here in hearing these papers, yet I could not help requesting to hear this one letter over again, because I think your lordships must agree with me that it is absolutely a masterpiece; and, indeed, they are all in a high degree excellent. Truly we have this day lost no time at all; for, I do assure you, if our attendance here were for



many days, I would willingly sit them out to hear so pious, wise, and politic instructions as these are." The Earl of Pembroke said, "there is not one thing that deserves to be excepted against; they deserve the highest commendation; they abound with soundness of matter, profitable instruction, with respect both to religion and policy; and possess uncommon elegance of language." Many concurred in this opinion; and one, addressing Mr. Ferrar, said, "Mr. Deputy, I pray you tell us who penned these papers? we have reason to think it was yourself." He, whose modesty and humility were not inferior to his rare accomplishments, replied, that they were the letters of the company and its council; that in all weighty affairs rough draughts were made of what they judged proper to be done, which were presented to the council to receive any alterations they pleased; thus every thing was concluded upon the advice of many. After much commendation of his modesty and ability, one replied to him, "Mr. Deputy, that the papers before us are all the production of one pen is plainly discernible: they are jewels, all from one rich cabinet, of which we have un-

doubted reason to believe you are the true possessor."

The charter of the company was nevertheless suppressed. The extension of our colonies, and the dissemination of the doctrines of the Reformed Church on the continent of America, both which objects were zealously advanced by the Virginian Company, were probably observed with jealousy by the Spanish court; and the influence of Spanish gold in the English capital, may, during the corrupt reign of James I., have had its effect in instigating the persecution of the association.

Whether Cranfield loved money better than the interests of true religion and his country, is a question which, at this period, it is not easy to determine; although, from the active part he took in the suppression of the company, a suspicion may perhaps be excited not quite favourable to his immaculate patriotism, or unquestionable disinterestedness.

In the year 1624 a parliament was called, and now Mr. Ferrar had to appear in a new character; for, without any effort or seeking of his own, he was, through the influence and by the means of some of the lords connected

with the Virginian Company, elected a member of the House of Commons. Sir Edwin Sandys, and other gentlemen of the company, were also returned to sit in the same parliament.

It was during this session that the Lord-Treasurer Cranfield was impeached, and accused of oppressing the patentees. This nobleman had been brought up as a merchant, and afterwards became, what in those days was called a "projector," that is, a person employing himself in pointing out to the officers of the exchequer sources of profit to his majesty, not always honourable nor legal; and in negotiating monopolies, and procuring patents and licenses for the king's subjects. By his consummate knowledge of all the mysteries of trade, he had contrived to work himself into favour with the Duke of Buckingham; and having shortly after married a near relation of the duke's, he was exalted with wonderful expedition to the dignity of a privy-counsellor, then master of the wards (a place of great trust and profit), and subsequently obtained the high office of lord-treasurer, and was created Earl of Middlesex.

Cranfield gained much credit with the king

for his dexterity and shrewdness in financial matters ; but he incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Buckingham, which was the origin of his downfall.

During the absence of the duke and Prince Charles in Spain, the lord-treasurer, it would appear, had been negligent in issuing out such sums of money as were demanded for defraying the enormous expenses incurred in that useless mission : and not only this, but he had also ceased to correspond with the duke with that deference he had used to do ;—he had even the courage to dispute his commands, and appeal to the king, whose ear was always inclined to him, and in whom he began to believe himself so far fastened, that he should not stand in need of the future support of the favourite.

The prince and the duke returned from Spain ; the parliament was summoned for February 12, 1624 ; and the Spanish match was broken off.

The duke, finding that the parliament was well-disposed towards him, and being assured of the prince's kindness, projected the ruin of this bold rival of his, of whom he saw clearly that the king had so good an opinion, that it

would not be in his sole power to crush him, as he had done others of exalted station.

He therefore persuaded some leading men in the House of Commons to proceed against the Earl of Middlesex in the way of impeachment, for corruption in his office. The king strongly opposed this measure; his reasons are stated by Lord Clarendon, and distinguished by extraordinary penetration:—"When this prosecution was entered upon," says Clarendon, "and that the king clearly discerned it was contrived by the duke, and that he had also prevailed upon the prince to be well pleased with it, his majesty sent for them, and with much warmth dissuaded them from appearing further in it; and conjured them to use all their interest and authority to restrain it, as such a wound to the crown as would not easily be healed. And when he found the duke unmoved by all the considerations, arguments, and commands he had offered, he said with an oath, 'Stenny, you are a fool, and will shortly repent this folly; and will find that in a fit of popularity you are making a rod with which you will be scourged yourself;' and, turning to the prince, told him, that '*he* would

*have enough of parliament impeachments ;*’ and ‘when I shall be dead, you will have too much cause to remember how much you have contributed to weaken the crown by the two precedents you are now so fond of,’ intending as well the engaging the parliament in the war, as the prosecution of the Earl of Middlesex.”

The king’s warnings were not heeded ; and the duke’s power, supported by the prince’s countenance, was grown so great, that it was in vain for the king to interpose. The Commons, therefore, proceeded to the impeachment, and Cranfield was brought to his trial. The Lord Cavendish, Sir Edwin Sandys, and Mr. Ferrar, were ordered by the house to draw up the charge. Mr. Ferrar was deputed to bring it in ; and he did so in a speech of very considerable length, delivered with great natural eloquence. The earl, however, made so good a defence, that, in the opinion of many who heard all the evidence, he was absolved from any very notorious crime ; but, nevertheless, he *was condemned*, and sentenced to be excluded from his seat in parliament during his life, deprived of his place, fined in the sum of fifty thousand pounds, and committed to the

tower during the pleasure of the king, *who liberated him immediately !*

It must be admitted that Ferrar was not himself unscathed in this political contest : his conscience was wounded both as regarded his God and his king. In taking so active and conspicuous a part in this transaction, he had opposed the wishes of James, who was known to be unfriendly to the impeachment. He had yielded to the solicitations of the directors and proprietors of the company, and in doing so, it seems that some free speeches of his against the will of his prince, though exceedingly well meant, and tending to the ends of public justice, were, nevertheless, a source of long and deep regret to his loyal heart : so much so, that he was heard to say, stretching out his right hand, "I would I were assured of the pardon of that sin, though on the condition that this hand were cut off."

It is by no means improbable that, disgusted at the too great virulence manifested in political discussions, as well as at the indecent triumph displayed on the fall of Cranfield, and feeling himself too much entangled in these matters, so foreign from the tranquil and peace-

able bias of his mind, he resolved to avail himself of the first opportunity of retiring with honour from those turbulent scenes of man's excited feeling. If at this time Mr. Ferrar's hands were full of public business, they were also overloaded with the affairs of his own family, which, according to the information communicated to him at Madrid, he found, at his coming home, involved in such difficulties, that nothing but a merciful Providence, consummate address, and great good management, could have effected their deliverance.

His brother John's property was seven thousand pounds; but being engaged for his friends and partners six thousand deep, he was left to pay all the debt.

Mr. Ferrar the elder died about this time, in a good old age, and left his son Nicholas (although the younger) his sole executor. He therefore undertook to satisfy all the creditors, and gave himself no rest until he had done so; and also bought off his brother, by compounding upon very advantageous terms.

In grateful memorial of this preservation, when his whole family was sinking, he, after the affairs were settled, composed an admirable



form of thanksgiving for the occasion, setting apart the last day of every month as a day of devotion, in which these prayers and praises for the family's deliverance were solemnly and constantly offered up, until the iniquity of the times dissolved their happy society.

While he was working with unremitting industry to redeem those whom God had committed to his charge from the ruin of their temporal things, the great plague of 1625 began to disclose its horrors. The infection had reached the house next to the Ferrars, and an individual there died of the plague. Hopes had been entertained that the disease of the deceased person was not the plague; and the Ferrar family were invited and attended the funeral. But another sickening in the same neighbour's house, Mr. Ferrar became convinced of the danger; and, in pious care of his aged mother, conveyed her and the rest of the household to her daughter's, Mrs. Collet, at Bourne, in Cambridgeshire. Still he did not quit the city himself, but remained in it when the weekly victims to the scourge amounted to four thousand. His object was to pay every one his due, and to clear the estate of all en-

gements. His mother had purchased a manor the year before, in so obscure a village as scarce had any name in our most accurate maps, until the fame of the holy life he afterwards lived in that place, made the name of Little Gidding sound almost as high in England during his life, as that of the institution of Port Royal did in a neighbouring kingdom.

To this spot of Ferrar's abode and employment we must give a new chapter, where we shall have to exhibit him in a new, but not less useful or less interesting, character, in the peaceful shades of devotional seclusion.

## CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE Gidding was an almost depopulated place, near Huntingdon. The manor-house, and a cottage for the shepherds, were the only habitations in the parish. The whole estate lay in pasture; its situation was considered healthy; and Ferrar had despatched his brother John, at the beginning of the plague, to make ready an apartment for him, whither at last he came himself. His mother still remained at Bourne, while he was passing a species of quarantine in Huntingdonshire, lest he should carry infection among those whom he so much loved. It was his wish that the period of this expurgation should have extended to a month, but the affectionate mother and matron could not be so long restrained from seeing him who had so nobly ventured and stood between the living and the dead, to save her and her posterity; and so, running all hazards, within a few days of Ferrar's arrival at Gidding, she rode thither from Bourne, a distance of about fifteen miles.

Their meeting was not unlike that of the patriarch Jacob and his son Joseph, after his father had given him up for lost, whilst he was providing for the support of his family. The interview was not only passionately kind, but zealously devout; both of them blessing God for his providential deliverance, and for their happy re-union; and she again and again blessing her son. Could the ninety-first Psalm fail to occur to Ferrar's mind and memory on this occasion? Could he forget what the Psalmist there says of the godly, of their security, and of their habitation? Could he hesitate, in grateful humility, to take up the sacred song, and say, "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the *noisome pestilence*. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come

nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Ferrar entreated his mother to enter their rude house, and repose herself after her journey. "Not so, my son," she replied, "not so; yonder I see the *church*; thither let us go, to give God thanks that he has brought me to this good place, and restored to me my son." She was assured of the difficulty of getting into it; for as yet there had not been time to remove the hay that was in it, which was speedily to have been done. For by the sacrilege and profaneness of the former proprietor of Gidding, the house of God was turned into a barn, and adapted to other degrading purposes connected with the habits and employments of agriculture.

But Mrs. Ferrar had in her devotion a spark of that fire which warmed the breast of Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, of whom

her son affirms, “that if a dragon had stood between her and the *altar*, he verily believed she would have stepped through him to advance thither.” So this devout matron persisted in her ardent resolution, and, thrusting herself into the church a little way, she kneeled, and prayed and wept there for some time: then coming forth, she charged her son to send instantly for all the workmen about the house, which were many, and commanded them to fling out all the hay at the church-window, and to clean it as well as they could for the present. She was obeyed; and she saw all this done before she would stir, or set her foot within the door of her future abode. Such was this matron’s zeal for the Lord’s house, such was her “love for the habitation of his house, and the place where his honour dwelleth.”

The ruinous state of their dwelling afforded not even necessary comforts; there was scarcely a dry room in the house in which to lodge the lady of the manor; yet they passed their time away with great cheerfulness; and the next morning, orders were given for the thorough repair of the church, and workmen were, without delay, employed in restoring the neglected

and profaned edifice to a state suitable to the sacred purposes of its erection.

Thus did this holy woman acquit herself, like a mother worthy indeed of such a son ; her zeal in this transaction overstepping his, as if she had vowed the Psalmist's vow, to give herself " no rest until she had found out a place for the temple of the Lord." But she publicly acknowledged at this time having made another vow, of more solemn importance, which was, " to serve God better than she had heretofore done ; and to this end, to seek earnestly to be made herself more a temple of the Holy Ghost, since God had redeemed her and her children from distress and death, and had brought them to so pleasant a place, where she could repeat the psalm in her own happy experience, that ' her lot was fallen in a fair ground, and she had a goodly inheritance ;' therefore ' would she serve the Lord as long as she lived.' "

At the expiration of a month, when no danger appeared of infection from her son's having come out of the fatal city, Mrs. Ferrar sent for her children and grandchildren, and other dear relations, from Bourne, that they

might dwell and serve God together at the new manorial habitation of Little Gidding. It required cost, labour, and time, to repair the old manor-house, so as to make it a suitable abode for a religious and numerous family, consisting of about forty persons; of whom above twenty were so descended from Mrs. Ferrar, that they kneeled to her, morning and evening, for her blessing. Then our good master of the house, who was, as it were, the soul that animated the whole family with piety, began to bring all their affairs, both spiritual and temporal, into as good order as could be expected, where every thing was but in its beginning, and as the afflictions of the times permitted.

The church was now made fit for use; and in the enlargement and adorning of it, there were none of the family that did not, in some measure, assist and contribute; and they who, through absence, could not do it themselves, contrived to have a stone laid by some hand that was on the spot. Mr. Ferrar obtained leave of the Lord Bishop of the diocese (Bishop Williams, an old college-acquaintance of his, and now his neighbour at Buckden), in consideration of



the plague still raging in the devoted city, and that dreadful calamity being then the common object of the kingdom's prayers, to use the Litany *every day* in the church ; and, having once introduced it, he had license to retain it after the plague, thus interceding still for the sins of the world, the origin and cause of all its misery. They separated the public prayers of the Church into three distinct daily services ; and the clergyman of the next parish, Steeple Gidding, was ever ready to assist them. He was so friendly a man, that he and the family at the manor-house were, from the convenient situation of their respective churches and houses, a help and blessing to each other. For, as the shepherds *lead* their sheep in the eastern countries, and go before them, to which custom our Saviour alludes, where he says, that “ the sheep hear his voice and follow him,” so this good neighbour of theirs, like a true spiritual guide, walked, with his own flock after him, from the top of the hill hard by them, to officiate at their church in the valley. Thus they began already to taste the delicious fruits of peace and tranquillity ; and they found, by comfortable experience, how much the pleasant retirement of

the place (for their family was all the parish,) contributed to the serenity of their thoughts, and the purity of their devotion. In religious exercises, in works of charity, in domestic and agricultural avocations, and in superintending the repairs of the house and church, they passed the latter part of the unhealthy summer of 1625, and all the long winter, at Gidding. But at the approach of Easter, some of the family decided on visiting London.

The plague had now ceased, and Mrs. Ferrar desired to take her last leave of her town friends, expecting to see them no more, unless it be permitted to recognise those whom we have loved on earth, at the great Easter morning of the resurrection of the just ! She delighted in her country privacy ; and in the quaint mode of expression of the times, “ she resolved,” she said, “ by God’s mercy, to take *livery* and *seisen* of her new purchase, by laying her bones there,” as the first purchase we read of in the world was the burying-place of Sarah, the mother of the faithful. Accordingly she repaired to London ; and having let their great house there, and having done all that they had to do in this world, as those who would have

no more to do with it ; and God having blessed them with all the success they could desire, in the final settlement of their earthly concerns ; they proposed to remain in London only till about a fortnight after Whitsunday, and then return to their future earthly destination at Gidding.

As the holy season of Pentecost approached, the embryo resolution in Ferrar's mind drew towards maturity, and that which had hitherto been only an intention, to be executed at a convenient season, now became a full determination. This resolution was no other than entering into holy orders, and thus, in an especial and solemn manner, devoting himself to that religious course of life, which he had so long and so ardently thirsted after. This intention, however, he concealed from his family, even from his mother. The week before Whitsunday his abstinence was observed to be more than usually strict ; his hours of sleep were curtailed ; his devotional retirement more prolonged ; and on Whitsun-eve it was supposed, upon strong conjectural grounds, that he passed the whole night in prayer and meditation in his closet. But as such acts of devotion were not unfrequent in Ferrar, they excited no won-

der, and no suspicion of his intended purpose. His determination was now made ; and without acquainting any other of his friends of his intention, lest they might oppose his design, he confided his purpose only to his former tutor, Dr. Lindsell, who was so transported with delight to hear that his pupil had at last decided on a course of life strongly recommended by him, and often debated between them, that he was like one in a dream, and could scarcely credit his own ears ; besides, he anticipated the satisfaction of seeing his scholar and his friend in full orders, since now he was inclined to be a deacon ; and the Doctor would often say,—“ If Ferrar could but be prevailed upon to ascend the pulpit, he were then in his proper orb, and would *shine among those who turn many to righteousness.*”

Early on Trinity Sunday, in the year 1626, in the thirty-fifth year of Mr. Ferrar's age, he repaired to Henry the Seventh's chapel, at Westminster Abbey, with his friend Dr. Lindsell, by whom Bishop Laud was prepared to receive him, with tokens of particular esteem, and with a great deal of joy, that he was to lay hands on so extraordinary a person.

He was accordingly ordained a deacon, and

no more, for he protested he dare not advance one step higher. Towards evening he returned home to his mother, and entreated her to hear him read a document, which he wished to shew her, written on vellum, and signed with his own hand. He drew it out from the place where he wore it—next his heart! It was a solemn vow, which he had made to Almighty God, “That since God had afforded him so many striking deliverances from so many perilous attempts of the devil and man upon his soul and body; and since his family was now rescued from a ruin so deplorable, and, but for God’s infinite goodness to them, unavoidable; he would separate himself to serve God in this holy calling, namely, to be the Levite himself in his own house, and to make his own relations, who were many, his cure of souls;” adding, “that he had that day received episcopal authority to do so.” His devout mother, and some of his relations who were present, were as much amazed at the beginning of the discourse, as they were overjoyed at the end of it. She showered her tears and benedictions upon him, beseeching God to fill him every day more and more with his Holy

Spirit, and to grant him a long life, as an unspeakable blessing to her and her whole family. And they all assured him, that they likewise, by God's assistance, would set themselves, with greater care and diligence than ever, to attend to the "one thing needful."

The earnest meditation, the fervent prayer, and the deep humility, that preceded and accompanied this holy man's dedication of himself to the service of the sanctuary of his God, are deserving of notice and imitation. A work, excellent in itself, may yet be undertaken in a spirit unworthy of it; and hence, perhaps, the failure, in too many instances, of ministerial usefulness. Is the ministry entered upon, and carried on, in a secular spirit? Then the great Head of the Church, who, by his inspired Apostle says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," withholds his blessing from those servants who make the sanctuary subservient to worldly ends. Is the end and aim of ministerial usefulness the glory of God and the salvation of souls? Yet can neither be accomplished by man's unaided effort or ability, however powerful in mental, or abundant in temporal resources. Erudition

may astonish, eloquence may dazzle, wealth may influence, the world may applaud, every thing may appear to combine to exalt a character, and yet the very thing which constitutes its real value may be wanting. The light of heaven must be given, or the temple of man's building, however beautiful or magnificent, will be all dark within. A living coal must be brought from the altar to the lips of the prophet, or his song, though sweet and solemn, shall die away in vain cadences. The Spirit of our God must move upon the heart, or all will be waste and void.

This insufficiency of man being once acknowledged and felt, brings him, with all he has and is, to the foot of the mercy-seat, as a dependent creature. It tells him that a work, to be prosperous, must be begun, continued, and ended in Him *with* whom is the residue of the Spirit, *from* whom that Spirit flows, and *by* whom it is given to all who ask for it. If one person more than another needs the all-powerful influences of the Spirit from above, it is he who is called to the ministration of holy things in the Lord's visible temple here below.

The mixing of secular pursuits and a secu-

lar spirit with the ministry of God's word, is the great drawback upon ministerial usefulness; and the consideration of "whose they are, and whom" they desire to "serve," should duly influence every candidate for holy orders, before he venture to enter upon a course of life, in which *holiness* should be the chief characteristic.

The example of Mr. Ferrar, as respects his pious meditation, his humility, his prayerfulness, his detachment from the world, his devotedness to the service of God and good of his family, is imitable and deserving of imitation. It is by the blessing of God on similar means and graces, that the labour of the Christian minister is prospered, the Christian religion preserved and extended, and families, people, and nations converted; the wilderness and the solitary place are made glad; and instead of the place of dragons and desolation, there is seen verdure and beauty, flowers, and blossoms, and fruit.

O that priests and people could be roused to a holy emulation of this devoted man! Would any one have a spark of that warmth which animated his zeal, self-denial, and devotedness,



let him go to the source whence Ferrar derived it; let him be reminded of a passage in Scripture containing an invaluable promise, but to the attainment of which, the soul that is sunk in apathy or love of the world can never reach : “ Ye shall find me,” says Jehovah, “ when ye seek me with the whole heart.”

## CHAPTER VII.

THE news of his taking the order of deacon was quickly spread over all the city and court. Some of his friends were ready to condemn him. But though all did not condemn, all wondered at the course he had taken. The best and wisest applauded him—among whom Sir Edwin Sandys, who had as much veneration for him now as he had affection for him heretofore. This excellent person gave a new but unequivocal testimony of his confidence and respect for Mr. Ferrar, by requesting him, and prevailing with him, to become executor to his last will; and he charged Lady Sandys (a lady of extraordinary discretion and piety) to do nothing of any great consequence in the management of the estate without the advice of Mr. Ferrar.

Some nobleman connected with the Virginia company, supposing that he would not *now* refuse preferment in the church, though he had declined advancement in the state,

offered him livings, then of considerable value. One pressed him to accept a living of 300*l.* a-year; another nobleman courted him to take a presentation of 400*l.* a-year; but he returned his acknowledgments to these honourable peers for their good will, thus freely manifested, promising to pray for their prosperity; but as he had already parted with all propriety in his temporal estate, by sharing it equally with his kindred for their common good, so he would employ his talent, or half-talent as he called it (for he had a very humble opinion of his own abilities), to make them partakers of the true spiritual treasures. So, bidding a long farewell to the great and busy world, he, with his mother and family, returned to Little Gidding.

The first thing that engaged Mrs. Ferrar's attention, on her return to the country, was the beautifying of the church. It was by this time thoroughly repaired and made fit for the purposes of divine worship; but she was not merely satisfied with the *decent* appearance of the house of God, she would have it also *adorned*. She ordered the walls to be wainscoted, and the floor neatly boarded; and this was done, not only for cleanliness, but for

warmth; for comfort was also to be considered, when so much of their time was to be spent in the church. She adorned the communion-table with carpets of blue silk, embroidered with gold; the pulpit and reading-desk were hung with fine cloth of the same colour, richly laced and fringed, with valances about each of them. She covered the floor upon which the altar was raised with sky-coloured silk, the benches round the chancel with blue taffeta, and all the rest, we are told, “was suitable and very noble; but these were ornaments only for Sundays and holydays. There were carpets of tapestry and green cloth for the week-days; there was a font set up; and a great eagle of brass, to hold a fair large Bible.”

Let no one deride the zeal or taste displayed by this excellent matron in the embellishment of the Lord's house. She did it as unto the Lord! She thought differently from multitudes of the rich, in her own days as well as the present time, whose houses exhibit a display of modern art, refinement, and luxury, far beyond good Mrs. Ferrar's imagination, whilst the houses of God which they frequent, in too many instances scarcely present the appear-

ance of common decency ; and are they content to see it so ? It is upon the state of country churches especially that this observation bears ; and if this little book should fall into the hands of any country gentlewoman, whether the mother, wife, or sister of a country clergyman, let her, as she looks round upon her well-furnished, or, perhaps, well-adorned house, pause, ere she add one superfluous article to the already tasteful display, and reflect, that the money expended in domestic articles *merely ornamental*, if thrown into an *altar-money purse*, and employed in the chaste and sober decoration of the house of God, might afford, not only an exercise of taste, but also evince a commendable zeal in a cause too much neglected.

It is not intended to place Mrs. Ferrar on the pedestal of taste, as an object of imitation in that respect ; it is not her good taste, but her good zeal that we would commend to our countrywomen, and especially to those connected with the clergymen of our establishment. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and the house of the Lord lie waste ? Mrs. Ferrar thought the house of God the

only place on which costly furniture was not ill bestowed, and in this her son not only approved, but animated her zeal and devotion.

No sooner was the church finished, in all its parts of decorum, comfort, and ornament, than their care was immediately turned to a point of unquestionable usefulness, which was the establishment of a school. This circumstance will, it is anticipated, prove at once a redeeming feature in the character of Mrs. Ferrar, even among those readers who think her zeal for ornamenting the church had flowed into a channel too profuse. But we shall see, that, whilst the ornamental was not despised in the Little Gidding establishment, the useful was not overlooked. An ancient pigeon-house, that belonged to the manor, was fixed upon for the school-room. The feathery tenants were soon disbanded. The Ferrars' estate was all pasture, and they, having no harvest of their own, thought it not right to harbour so many little thieves, to devour their neighbour's corn; so the dovecot was enlarged and transformed into a handsome school-house, where not only the children of their own household were instructed, but also those of adjoining parishes, upon the

request of their parents, had liberty to come. "Here," according to Mr. Ferrar's right reverend biographer, "they might learn virtue as well as grammar, music, and arithmetic, together with fair writing; for which arts and sciences they had three several masters; and they had their several hours of the day to attend their distinct business." It will be seen, by and by, why music was admitted amongst the arts taught in the Little Gidding academy; the praise and glory of God were the primary objects of the founder and foundress of this remarkable little society; and the attachment of Mr. Ferrar to the effusions of the sweet Psalmist of Israel would ill have accorded with the absence of sacred vocal and instrumental harmony.

He assigned to all his female relations, according to their ages and conditions, "chambers, closets, gardens, and walks of pleasure; he fitted up convenient accommodations for the schoolmasters and scholars, and placed his own lodging so centrally in the house, that he could hear every thing, and attend to the preservation of good order." He fitted up one room, which he called the infirmary, and appropriated it

solely to the use of any of his young household who might be indisposed. As every thing at Little Gidding was to be done decently and in order, he appointed rules and times for the recreation of the young; they had places for running and vaulting, and for the exercise of the bow and arrows. On Thursdays and Saturdays the children were allowed part of the afternoons for these pastimes; but although those times are expressly mentioned as seasons of recreation, we are not to suppose that the whole of the other four days of the week were entirely employed in the more sedate exercises.

As Little Gidding partook somewhat of the conventual system, though without its defects, our readers of the softer sex will perhaps wish to know whether the females of the society confined themselves to any peculiar dress or habit. We are glad that we can afford them information on this subject, by assuring them, on the indisputable veracity of a bishop, that “the habit of the young women was *a black stuff*, all of one *grave fashion*, and *always the same* ;” and he adds, “if ever women merited the title of *the devout sex*, these gentlewomen won it by their carriage, and deserved to wear



it." But we can also gratify our fair inquirers with particulars of a more interesting nature regarding these good Protestant sisters of charity.

They were expert with their needles, and they made them, as well as their scissors, serve the altar and the poor. They were "fine surgeons," and kept by them balsams, and oils, and every thing needful for the alleviation and cure of simple surgical casualties. They superintended the distilling of cordial waters ; and a room was allotted them for the safe custody of all their useful stores. And then, in the distribution of them they were most liberal, as occasion required ; and as they gave as freely to their country neighbours as they had themselves freely received all from God and their good uncle, they were sure not to want applicants. None of them were fastidious about dressing, with their own hands, the wounds of the poor ; but as for prescribing medicines, *that* they were strictly forbidden to do by their uncle. It would have been more appropriately his department, had he chosen to practise it : of his ability to do so, none can doubt who remember his studies at Padua. But, together with helps

and comforts for the body, these young ladies, of whom there were upwards of nine, were able and ready to administer good counsels, with prayers and spiritual comforts, to their patients, for their souls' health. To remove the burden of household affairs from his aged mother's shoulders, her son directed four of his nieces to be the managers of the domestic economy, but yet in such a manner that it might prove a burden to none, but rather a recreation to all. He contrived that every sister should be sole directress of the household for one month in four, and thus Mary's better part was not taken away from her who acted the character of their Martha. She was not to apply her hands to any thing servile; but her office required reflection, management, the judicious direction of servants, and an authoritative, though mild, firmness in being obeyed by them. She was required to book every farthing of their weekly expenses, allowing every small matter its column in their account-book; so that, at the end of the month or year, they could cast their eye on what they spent in every little necessary or comfort of life. These domestic exercises made Mr. Ferrar's nieces, several of whom be-

came afterwards wives and mistresses of their own establishments, not only perfect accountants, but also good managers of a family.

The land was let out in parcels to their tenants, who, by agreement, were to serve the house with certain provisions at constant rates : their diet was neat and frugal, yet accommodated with sufficient variety to every one's health and constitution.

From this period of time, to write the life of Mr. Ferrar is to write many lives ; that is, to describe the way and manner of their living under the discipline and direction of him who was their chief. It may therefore well be expected, that the rule by which he ordered his family should be set down ; and it will exhibit a system which some will think severe, many unnecessary, and more " righteous overmuch." A few there will be who will admire, and having the power, yet will not dare to imitate. The world, commonly, still retains too strong a hold upon the affections and hearts of men ; and the piety and virtues of Little Gidding assimilate too little with the less retiring character of modern religion, to command followers, though they may excite admiration.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SUNDAY.

O day most calm, most bright,  
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,  
The indorsement of supreme delight,  
Writ by a friend, and with his blood ;  
The couch of time ; care's balm and bay ;  
The week were dark but for thy light ;  
Thy torch doth shew the way.

\* \* \* \*

Thou art a day of mirth ;  
And where the week-days trail on ground,  
Thy flight is higher as thy birth.  
O let me take thee at the bound,  
Leaping with thee from seven to seven,  
Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,  
Fly hand in hand to heaven !

GEORGE HERBERT.

IN presenting a description of the pursuits and habits of life of the inhabitants of Little Gidding, it may be well to begin with the first and best day of the week.

On the Lord's day, then, they rose, as on

other days, at five o'clock in winter, and four in summer : Mrs. Ferrar herself would be up at five ! Then, having, on their bended knees, in their several apartments, offered to God their morning sacrifice of prayer and praise, through Him by whom alone that incense reaches the mercy-seat available, they repaired into a spacious apartment furnished with curtains, and where, in winter, a cheerful fire was kindled by the time of their assembling. There they found Mr. Ferrar without fail, who, like the shepherd-star that “ bids the shepherd fold,” was their leader in all their morning and evening devotional exercises.

To him the young people repeated the chapters and Psalms they had committed to memory, which usually lasted till about seven o'clock. The morning meal, and their own private reading or conversation, filled up the chasm of time until nine o'clock, when the bell called them to prayers in the church. Then all the household reassembled in the great chamber, where a hymn was sung, the organ accompanying their voices. They then proceeded, by a covered way, from the house to the church, in order, two and two, according

to their ages and conditions ; the three school-masters, in gowns, leading the way ; the youths, in black gowns, following : then appeared Mr. Ferrar, leading his aged and venerable mother, his two brothers going before her, and all the children after her. The servants closed the procession.

The masters took their places in the chancel ; the boys kneeled on the upper steps ascending into the chancel ; the women sat by themselves (as was the custom in the ancient church) ; the reading-desk and pulpit stood opposite to each other, and *were of equal height*. Mr. Ferrar's contemporary, George Herbert, also reduced the pulpit of his church of Layton Ecclesia to the standard of its neighbour the desk ; for Walton, in his life of Herbert, mentions that " he (Herbert) would often say, they should neither of them have a precedency or priority of the other ; but that prayer and preaching, being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have equal honour and estimation." It will be admitted, in our days, that the desk is not less honoured by a suitable and convenient elevation of its neighbour, the pulpit ; but that the pulpit, however lofty, is always disho-

noured when it becomes the medium of conveying doctrine at variance with its Scriptural ally below.

The family and household of Gidding Hall being thus arranged, Mr. Ferrar, habited in his surplice and hood, then stepped into the reading-desk, and officiated at divine service.

After returning home, his elder nieces, and some others deputed to that office, sat in a gallery if it were summer-time, or if it were winter in their large room with a fire, where the children repeated to them the Psalms they had learned out of book the week before. These children were of neighbouring parishes, to whom notice was given, that such of them as would take the pains to learn the Psalms by heart, and come on Sunday morning to repeat them at Gidding, should have, each of them, a Psalter bestowed on them, a penny, and their Sunday dinner into the bargain.

The system of rewards has been condemned in our day by many excellent persons, who are nevertheless zealous for the instruction of the youthful poor. To engender or encourage mercenary principles, they say, is an evil ; and so it is : but to encourage habits of order, clean-

liness, attendance on divine worship, proper observance of the Lord's day, and the exercise of memory, are points of such overpowering importance, that they are well purchased even at the dear rate of the principle objected to. In some places, unhappily, nothing to any extent, in the way of Sunday-school instruction, can be effected without rewards ; but wherever the mercenary bias manifests itself too prominently, it may be partially checked by the watchful and judicious management of those who have the oversight of the young. This mercenary principle is not, however, universal. In too many cases it has, no doubt, been discovered and lamented, and, perhaps, in more instances discovered than remedied ; but it may also be believed, that, in some cases, the approbation of the teacher or stated visitor of a Sunday-school has conveyed more real delight to the heart of the young pupil, than pecuniary or any other species of reward could possibly have done.

It may appear obvious, that in Mr. Ferrar's time, when cheap and useful books for the poor were unknown, the pecuniary reward of a penny was more defensible than it would be in



our days, when a small series of some of our penny books contains a little treasury of instruction. But who will object to the poor children's Sunday dinner? A Sunday dinner, at which some adult Sunday scholars were permitted, at a gentleman's house near which the editor once resided, was perhaps a very strong inducement, in the first instance, to submit to the two or three hours of instruction which they received afterwards. But this inducement gradually weakened, as the substantial advantage of instruction was felt; and the desire of learning to read, after the first difficulties were over, became the real motive for attending, which, probably, all the scholars would have done, even if the dinner had been withheld. One of these men declared to the editor, that he would not exchange the benefit and comfort which he had obtained by being able to read the Holy Scriptures for any temporal advantage the world could bestow. The man was a steady and consistent Christian, and was about forty years of age when he began to learn to read.

The united advantages, encouragements, and rewards at Little Gidding, brought many

children thither on the Lord's day. The happy consequences of their Sunday tuition were not confined to themselves. But Bishop Turner shall himself give the detail. "This drew in," the Bishop says, "many boys and girls; so that an honest divine, who frequented the place, assured me, he had seen forty or fifty children there at a time. Their parents, who were mostly plain country folks, were entirely pleased and obliged. And speedily, not only their parents, but the neighbouring ministers, when they came to Gidding, protested that a mighty change was wrought, not only on the children, but on the men and women, who sat hearing their children repeating their books at home; for whereas heretofore their tongues were exercised in singing lewd and profane, or, at least, vain ballads, which much estranged their minds from the way of virtue, now they heard the streets and doors resounding with the sacred poetry of David's harp, which drove the evil spirit away from Saul." Thus one devout family brought again the golden age of the Church, as it is described by St. Jerome, when "every ploughman and every day-labourer," he says, "refreshed himself at his

toil by singing the Psalms, and knew the time of the day, without the sun, by the progress he had made in his Psalter."

Some of the parents entreated that their children might also be taught their catechism at Gidding; but *that* Mr. Ferrar refused, telling them, that bringing children to learn their Psalter was a thing by itself, but catechising was the business of their own minister and of their own parents. He informed them, that in doing some things good in appearance, one might do very ill, by encroaching on other men's offices; and he bade them have a special care of this well-baited and hidden snare, which the spiritual enemy every where lays in the way of well-meaning people, whom, when he cannot persuade to open and known sin, he will nevertheless tempt to do some handsome thing which is not their part to act, but savours rather of presumption in the performance.

The children not only repeated what they had learned in the last week, but some of them recited some part of what they had formerly learned, to fix these incomparable devotions in their memories. At half-past ten the minister of the next parish came with his own people,

who were not many, and most of them tenants to the lordship of Little Gidding, to preach there. The bell rang again to church, and the whole family, with the Psalms-children, as they were called, met him, and having taken their places, Mr. Ferrar went up into the chancel, and, at the communion-table, read the second service ; which being ended, and a Psalm sung, their neighbouring minister preached. As they came to the church, so in the same order they retired from it, and returned to the house. There they found long narrow tables ready spread, and placed upon tressels, the poor children arranging themselves on each side of the tables. The venerable mistress of the house did not think herself too good to follow our Saviour's example, of girding himself and serving his disciples ; for frequently she has been seen to set the first dish, for the children, on the table with her own hands. Grace being said, the children took their dinner standing to the tables, for to sit they were not permitted. Some of the family remained to see every thing conducted and disposed of in good order. The bell was rung to dinner in the parlour ; and all the household, standing in the

great dining-room, a hymn was sung by them, the organ playing. While they were feeding their bodies, one of the family, whose turn it was (for every one took his turn), read a chapter in the Bible, that their hearts and ears might not want the better spiritual food.

After dinner all had liberty to go whither they pleased ; some to the gardens and orchards, others to their chambers or closets. About two o'clock the bell again called them together for evening service at Steeple Gidding church, about a mile from the manor-house. On their return, the children went into the great chamber, and repeated all the Psalms which they had learned and said in several portions during the week. This being done, they parted again, and disposed of themselves as they listed till supper-time, which was about six in the evening, when the bell ringing, they came into the great parlour. The organ then began to play, and they to sing their anthem, whilst the refreshment was putting on the table. After grace, one read a chapter, and then another read a story out of the Book of Martyrs, or some part of sacred history. In summer-time, after supper, most of them recreated

themselves by walking : in winter, those who preferred it retired to their own apartments, or joined the elder people, who commonly entertained each other and the young with some useful discourse. At eight o'clock they were summoned to the oratory, where their devotional exercises again commenced by singing an anthem : then followed the evening family prayer. This being concluded, they separated for the night ; the young retiring to their beds, the others to their chambers ; for it was one of the rules of the establishment, that “ none must, after evening prayer, go up and down the house, but keep to their own apartments.”

Such was the Sunday's employment at Little Gidding, and very conformable was it with Mr. Ferrar's judgment and opinion respecting the proper observance of that holy day, which opinion is thus expressed in his own words : “ It is a day of rest, not of pleasures ; it frees us from bodily labour, but it should the more produce the exercises of the mind. God *blessed* the day and *sanctified* it. They must both go together : if we would have it *happy*, we must make it *holy* ; and that can be done by nothing better than by taking a survey of all God's

works, according to the two divisions of heaven and earth, whereunto he hath reduced all sorts of generations. And if it seem too long and hard a matter to go through all, we need but *return to ourselves*, where we shall find an epitome of all."

On the first Sunday of the month, and on the great solemn festivals, they celebrated the holy communion without fail; and the afternoon of the Saturday before it was employed by the careful master of the house in explaining that holy mystery to the younger, in exhorting the elder, and in preparing them all for the best and noblest entertainment of devout souls. On communion-days, the servants that feasted with them in the church were not thought unworthy to eat in the parlour with them: it was their custom to sit at the lower end of the high table, where they dined that day.

We will mix up no description of their weekly pursuits with this detail of their Sunday employments. The account of the Lord's day at Little Gidding shall stand, like the day itself, alone; and as we began the chapter with its detail, with that we will also end it, calling to the mind of the Scriptural reader the word

of the Lord by the prophet, which was no doubt well known and well loved, because well acted upon, at Little Gidding. “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah, lviii. 13, 14.



## CHAPTER IX.

ON the week-days they employed themselves in the following mannner : they rose as early at least as on Sundays ; then, after their private devotions, they came into the great chamber before mentioned, where the younger nephews and nieces repeated to Mr. Ferrar himself some of the Psalms or chapters they had learned that week. This done, they retired for a time, every one to their apartments. At six the bell again invited them to the common room ; and the company that had the charge began the Psalms appointed for *that hour*—for each hour of the day had a certain proportion of Psalms allotted to be said in it, by some part or division of the family ; and they all knew their order and time of attendance ; so that “ *the whole Psalter was duly and devoutly said over by them, verse by verse, interchangeably, within the compass of the twenty-four hours !*”

Then one of them said, without book, one

of the heads of the concordance or harmony which they had made of the four Evangelists, of which more hereafter. This book was so divided into heads or chapters, and so many of those heads assigned to each hour of the day, that, beginning still on the first day of each month, and ending on the last, the Gospels were all said over in every month. A short hymn also was sung each hour, the organ playing to it : the hymn was commonly this :—

So angels sing, and so sing we,  
To God on high all glory be ;  
Let him on earth his peace bestow,  
And unto men his favour shew.

The services for every hour, though they were very solemn, yet were so framed, that the Collect, the Psalm, the Gospel, and all, lasted but a quarter of an hour. This done, they went all, in the order that has been described, to prayers in the church, where Mr. Ferrar officiated according to the Liturgy, without adding or diminishing a word. By this time the hour of seven was come, which had such another office of Collect, Psalm, portion of the Gospel, and hymn ready for it : this was performed by the second company. Then all the

children breakfasted, and went to the school-house with their masters. The old gentlewoman took her chair, inspecting her daughters and grandchildren, like the olive-branches round about her table. They sat at their books or other good employments, in great silence, or, at least, avoiding "all vain talking and jesting, that was not convenient."

Every hour had its business, for so their wise patron had contrived, who used to tell them, that the *golden mean*, if one could light upon it, was the only way to effect great things with ease and pleasure; and this he prayed them to observe, even in their spiritual exercises. Some of them, therefore, spent part of the day in perfecting their concordance of the Scripture, or in getting it by heart; others in practising their vocal or instrumental music; some learning to write or cipher; some exercising their dexterity in gilding and binding books, for which purpose Mr. Ferrar engaged the daughter of a Cambridge bookbinder, who was expert in the business, to teach them that piece of skill.

To justify their allotting a part of their time to such mechanic arts, he put them in

mind of that passage in the Psalms,—“ Blessed are all they that fear the Lord and walk in his ways, for thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands ;” whereas “ the world,” said he, “ thinks the living upon rents and others men’s labours to be their honour and happiness ; David here makes the contrary an effect and sign of blessedness.” He instructed them that “ this was Adam’s punishment ; but it was also his medicine, to cure him of sloth and luxury.” But to proceed. At eight, nine, and ten o’clock, they did as at other hours. Just after the office for ten, the bell summoned them to church, when, by permission of the bishop of the diocese, the Litany was said *every day* in the week. At eleven, the set company of that hour did as the rest had done. Such was their occupation on week-days in the morning. By this time it was their dinner-hour ; and as the meal was bringing in and setting on a table below in the large parlour, they sung a hymn. When grace was said, and they had all taken their places, one of the youths, whose turn it was, read to them out of some book of English history ; for silence at meals they thought unpleasant, and common discourse they found

unprofitable. It was therefore agreed, that something easy and engaging, as voyages and travels, descriptions of foreign countries, and accounts of the rise, fall, and revolutions of nations, should be reserved for a time when the mind does not willingly admit of any very serious or deep speculations. This was considered as a certain way, not only to refresh, but also especially to enrich, their minds with many examples, tending to stir up generous and good affections. For the better retaining in memory what should be read, it was ordered that a summary collection should be kept in writing of all the passages worthy of their observation. The drawing of this abstract was one of their schoolmasters' tasks, and the transcribing of it fair was the department of some of the scholars.

Besides this, every day after dinner a repetition was made of something formerly read, the same matter, only in another form; that is, one of the boys, whose course it was, repeated a story compiled on purpose for him, and fitted to his capacity, by Mr. Ferrar. It was short and pleasant; the language good, the matter better, and always having a tend-

ency to increase their abhorrence of vice, and to promote virtue. This practice brought the youths into the habit of delivering any speech with a becoming assurance ; and not only taught them a graceful pronunciation, but accustomed them to express themselves with propriety and without affectation, when they spoke or wrote after such excellent copies of a chaste and clean style as Mr. Ferrar had set them.

This made them men betimes in useful knowledge, and also made the females acquainted with ancient and modern history. A family thus sequestering itself from the world, could not be said to despise the world for want of understanding ; for they knew the past and present state of empires, and were more learned in the great affairs of human life than many who lived in the throng of business, yet had little insight into *things*, and less into *themselves*, notwithstanding the great scuffle in the dark in which they were engaged, and for which they were never the wiser.

Mr. Ferrar introduced another piece of ancient Christian discipline, and that was watching, or vigils ; “ an exercise,” his biographer adds, “ almost lost in this drowsy age

of ours." It was required only from those of his family who would make it a free-will offering; no one was importuned, nor any the worse thought of, that did not think fit to take part in it. But he found many who were desirous of being his fellows in the guard, and of keeping the watch in their courses.

Their directions were, to begin the vigil by nine o'clock, which they continued till one in the morning, and no longer; though they that watched went not at all to their beds that night, but merely reclined from one to six in the morning. This was performed in several apartments and oratories, the men and women separate. The two of either sex which watched together, said, reverently and distinctly, all the Psalms of David which they had not repeated in the ordinary course during the day; one of them reciting one verse of the Psalm, and the other saying the following verse, by way of response.

And this they performed upon their knees, except during some vacant spaces of time, whilst, either some of them that could play, refreshed themselves by playing and singing—the organ being so placed, and tuned so low,

as not to disturb the rest of the family ;—or warmed themselves in winter by a good fire, provided in a room near their closets, that they might take no cold, or endanger their health, of which the master of the house was ever exceedingly careful. Their watch ended, they came and knocked at his door, bidding him good morrow, and leaving him a candle lighted at his door. He then got up and went into his study ; for *one* in the morning was the hour at which he constantly rose to his prayers and meditations, when it was not his turn to sit up at the midnight devotions. In this he was an hour earlier than our bishop and martyr Latimer, who was accustomed, even after he was eighty years of age, to rise at *two* ! Mr. Ferrar afterwards inured himself to watch three times a-week regularly, accustoming two of his nephews (whom he dearly loved) to endure hardships as good servants of Christ, and to watch with him three or four hours, but that only one night in the week.

During the heat of summer they sometimes passed that night in the church. As the child Samuel took up his lodging in the temple with old Eli, so the boys, after a few hours, were



bidden to lay themselves down to sleep in a bye-place, while their uncle persisted still in his divine contemplations, and came not home till five in the morning.

This is the description which Bishop Turner gives of the daily and nightly occupations of Mr. Ferrar and his family : they are presented nearly in his own words, but they shall not be dismissed entirely without remark.

The Church of England was not now merely emerging from the darkness and trammels of popery ; it had emerged, and its members could not now be said to be attached to the performance of self-denying exercises, either because those performances had remarkably distinguished some of the followers of the Church of Rome, or on account of the meritorious plea which that church allows. The charm was dissolved : time had cleared the religious atmosphere from many clouds ; but it had also generated exhalations of an unhealthy nature. If the dense clouds of popery had been dispersed, the fogs of an incipient laxity in church discipline and morality had also collected. Men of an indiscreet zeal were found, who thought they saw in ecclesiastical esta-

blishments the root of a disease which really had its origin in some of its unhealthy branches ; and the church was assailed with unqualified violence and malignity. Lord Clarendon describes, with the fidelity of an eye-witness, the contempt in which religious forms and ceremonies were held, and the profaneness and sacrilege with which holy edifices were treated. The Puritans, in one sweeping clause, denounced the clergy as unworthy of the respect or regard of the people. The monarch, whose arbitrary proceedings were not calculated either to soften the animosity between the Church and the Puritans, or to heal the breach which controversy had created in the Church itself, increased, by his unwise measures, the miseries of the times. To add to the other grounds of unhappiness, a metaphysical divinity had usurped the pulpit, and the people were tortured by hearing long, dry disquisitions, which the *heads* even of the learned could perhaps imperfectly comprehend, whilst the *hearts* of the many were altogether unassailed, unaffected, and uninfluenced. The situation of the state was scarcely less deplorable : party spirit ran high ; councils distracted, popular feuds, met by alternate weak-

ness and violence, and deepening gradually into bloodshed, distinguished the unhappy reign of King Charles the First.

Society could not be exempt from the effects of these evils : the head and heart being sick, the members suffered, groaned, and bled. Mr. Ferrar must have seen and lamented this. He could not stem the torrent of the prevailing abuses in the church, state, and society; he could only shew a noble example of devotedness and attachment to the institutions which his heart loved and his conscience approved. He retired from the Babel of his times and country, to avoid her sins, and lest he should be partaker of her plagues.

In his retirement, any more than in the busy scenes of life, Mr. Ferrar's energy of character could not be restrained or concealed : in whatever circumstances of life his lot had been cast, Ferrar still would have been a hero. His vow and his inclination had, by the blessing of God, established him at Little Gidding ; and there he shone as a bright light among his own family and people, the love of God constraining him to every good word and work, and the

love of souls influencing him to every effort, by example, prayer, and precept, for the eternal welfare of those about him. Besides being a lover of episcopal and ecclesiastical discipline, he had been brought up in the school of self-denial, and therefore watched diligently against the first temptation to relaxation, either in public ordinances or private observances. His attachment to the doctrines of the reformed and established church placed Mr. Ferrar quite beyond the suspicion of holding opinions at all bordering upon the Romish doctrine of merit, although his holy acts rivalled many of the most eminent saints of that church. He knew that there were *two ways* of performing religious exercises: one, wherein a meritorious plea is connected with them; another, which was Mr. Ferrar's way, in which no saving merit is attached to observances.

Mr. Ferrar knew that Luther's token of a "standing or a falling church—*justification by faith only*," was a sign from heaven, by which to be guided, safely and surely, through all the wanderings of the mortal pilgrimage. To this blessed doctrine, which is the origin of all

true peace,\* the source of all true holiness of lip and life, he had willingly subscribed when he was ordained to the service of the sanctuary, and set his heart and hand to the imperishable declaration, founded upon the eternal word of God, that “we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings : wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”† Nevertheless, he found religious exercises salutary : he felt that, by the grace of God, they were helps to the growth of holiness in the mind and heart ; they kept up the spiritual life within, and so tended to the meetness for the heavenly inheritance ; they were the means of more intimate communion between God and the soul ;—and who would relinquish one single devotional exercise, were it likely to become the means, in whole or in part, of any one of those objects, so dear to the converted heart ?

The rules of the family have been given.

\* “ Being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*Rom.* v. 1.

† Eleventh Article of the Church of England.

Are they censured, derided, or condemned *now*? So they were *then*. The Ferrars were well aware, that having engaged to steer a straight and even course for the port of everlasting rest, the waves of censure and calumny would beat upon them, though they were riding at anchor, and *that* perhaps more furiously than when they were out at sea. They therefore knew no better way than to declare beforehand how vigorously they resolved to bear up against them. It was partly upon this consideration—to set up, as it were, their defiance of all those winds which are raised by the prince of the power of the air out of the vulgar breath—and partly, on the score of gratitude, to publish their zealous acknowledgments of God's peculiar goodnes to their family, in bringing them out of the great tempest of the world, safe into that fair haven;—it was partly, perhaps, on these grounds, like the ancient heathen votaries, who, when they had escaped a storm, used to set up and dedicate a tablet inscribing honour and thanks to the power who delivered them, that the society of Little Gidding did, with the approbation of some other able advisers, set up in their great parlour, the common room

of entertainment of all comers, the following inscription, written in fair and legible characters, on a large tablet :—

I. H. S.

He that, by reproof of our errors, and remonstrance of that which is more perfect, seeks to make us better, is welcome as an angel of God ;

and

He that, by a cheerful participation of that which is good, confirms us in the same, is welcome as a Christian friend.

But,

He that any way goes about to disturb us in that which is, and ought to be, among Christians, though it be not usual in the world, is a burden while he stays, and shall bear his judgment wherever he be ;

and

He that censures us in absence, for that which in presence he made a show to approve of, both by a double guilt of flattery and slander, violates the bond of friendship and Christianity.

MARY FERRAR, widow, mother of this family, aged about eighty years, bids adieu to all fears and hopes of this world, and only desires to serve God.

## CHAPTER X.

It may not be entirely uninteresting to our readers to know something of the conduct pursued by the inhabitants of the manor-house to their country neighbours of the better sort.

It will be recollected, that when they entered upon the property of Gidding, the metropolis was groaning under that afflictive scourge, the plague; and their having so recently left the seat of contagion, did, according to their own wishes, put a stop to much intercourse with the neighbouring gentry all that year. Subsequently their design of religious retirement becoming well known, their neighbours dispensed with the punctilios of ceremony; yet had they no provocation to censure them as morose or uncivil; for, whenever they were pleased to afford their company at Gidding (which, for the novelty of the thing, many frequently did), they were received with all the obligingness, and treated with all the respect, to which, according to the rules of Christian



politeness and courtesy, they were entitled. The more substantial marks of hospitality also were not wanting; the refreshments of wine, or a tankard of ale, with a piece of cake, were offered to all comers of any note; but though many of high quality lingered there, as if desirous to stay their meals, or take up their lodging with them, yet they took it not amiss at their departure, that no invitation was given them, finding that it was not their custom to entertain strangers in that indiscriminate manner, except in cases of manifest necessity or charity.

It is obvious that limits were required in their hospitalities, or they would have been oppressed with a multitude of guests, which they could not civilly, or indeed possibly, have avoided. Yet some men of birth and fortune (as they discovered themselves by their conduct and conversation, and as they were known to be afterwards), led by so extraordinary a person as Mr. Ferrar, and the arrangements of his household, sent their servants into the neighbouring village, to wait for them there till morning, whilst they strayed in the dark to Gidding, pretending to have lost their way, and entreat-

ing a night's lodging. Such adventurous guests as these were set down to such an extemporary supper of warm meats as the oven supplied, and with which they were seldom unprovided.

One of these wandering guests gave an oral account of his visit to Dr. Turner, and would often celebrate that night's entertainment. The vicinity of Little Gidding to the great northern road drew great numbers, as well of the gentry as the clergy, to call upon Mr. Ferrar, as they passed and repassed that way. Many who were perfectly unknown to him, but who knew his merit, found some pretence or other to introduce themselves. Several persons of distinction, and many eminent scholars, were amongst his transient guests. Romish priests also were among his visitors, anxious to address their discourse to him, and discover his opinions, in which he had no reserves, as one well set and firmly established in the principles of the apostolical Church of England. He, without inquiring who they were, always entertained them with a generous freedom and calmness in their debates, and with all the hospitable courtesy suitable to the condition in which they appeared.

The nearest gentleman in the neighbourhood was a Roman Catholic; yet he and his lady often visited at Gidding, without any pressing expectations to be paid those respects in the same kind, by a family so constantly better employed than in returning visits of compliment. Besides, the master of their morals used to warn them all, but especially the younger people under his care, “that he is wise and good, and like to continue so, that keeps himself out of temptation.”

One day, this neighbour brought with him to Gidding three learned priests of his own religious communion; one of them a celebrated writer for the Church of Rome; all of them full of curiosity to sound a man of such depth of learning, of such an excellent understanding, and of so great piety, as rumour had attached to the character of Mr. Ferrar. He did not decline engaging with them; in which he was upon a vast advantage above ordinary managers of similar controversies, having in his travels, with his own eyes, seen their practices, and made it so much his business to compare them with their pretences. The conference was spun out to a great length; it was

supported on all hands with equal temper, and with such acuteness too, as not to leave the question where they found it. They traversed every essential point of difference between Protestant and Papist, and parted upon such terms as were proper for men who desired at least to maintain the communion of charity with each other.

One of them afterwards related that he had “seen Little Gidding, the place so much in every body’s mouth;” that “they found the master of the house another kind of man than they expected; a deep and solid man, of a wonderful memory, sharp-witted, and of a flaming eloquence. One who, besides his various reading, spoke out of experience, with insight into *things*, as well as *books*.” In conclusion, he was heard to say, that this man, if he lived to make himself known to the world, would give their church her hands full to answer him, and trouble them in another manner than Luther had done.

A more enlarged account of Mr. Ferrar and his recluses has been given, as to their openness and easiness in conversation, to prevent the common observation against this way of

living, that “ it is a pity such holy men should deprive the world of their company and example.” It was the less necessary for Mr. Ferrar to go out into the troublesome world, when the world flocked to his retirement, hardly one day passing in which some distinguished person, either friend or stranger, did not come to pay him reverence.

Mr. Ferrar was so easy of access, that although religiously careful of time, and anxious to spend it to the best advantage, he always gave orders that if any one came to speak with him, though he were at his studies, he should be informed of it; for he hoped they came for *their* good, or for *his own*; and the whole design of his life was to make himself and others better. Seldom did any one part with him but with satisfaction and improvement; and it can hardly be imagined what lasting fervours of devotion many carried away with them, who had spent but a few hours in that happy society.

It was one of the regulations of this establishment, which had set itself so heartily for heaven, that the presence of strangers should on no account interfere with or interrupt their stated devotional exercises, either in the house

or the church ; and if strangers of a different communion chose to join them in their devotions, they were the more welcome on that account. Some, indeed, who came only to gaze, with no great design to improve by his example, took upon them to tell him their grave judgment, that he lived too retired ; that he exacted too much from his own infirm body ; and that he studied too hard ; whereas a life of pleasure and recreation would better preserve him in health. He gave such persons to know, “ that what the world called living gallantly, and most like a gentleman, to eat and drink well (as they call it) ; to keep as irregular hours as they please of rising and going to bed ; to have their time so lying upon their hands, as to rack their invention for modes of mispending it, in hunting or hawking, carding or dicing, riding abroad upon visits, and doing all things accordingly ;” he protested “ that such a life to him (whatever it was to others) would be so dangerous, that if it were put to his choice, and he must instantly decide, whether he would enter upon that course of life, or suffer death, he would forthwith embrace the latter, rather than accept the former.”

But, since we are speaking of visitors, whom the sanctity of the man, and the novelty of the establishment, had drawn to Gidding, we must not omit to state how much honour was intended them by a visit from the queen-consort of Charles the First, if she had not been prevented by the impassable state of the roads across the country.

Her majesty being a rigid Roman Catholic, the honour designed was the more remarkable. Orders had actually been issued for the repair of the roads, in contemplation of this visit ; but the negligent observance of the command precluded the intended honour. Whereupon, her majesty, fancying that the king had all the while only rallied her with the story of a Protestant family, the discipline of which excelled that of the monasteries abroad, despatched a gentleman (a Mr. Newton) to Little Gidding, commanding him to take exact notice of what he found, and bring her a clear account of their manner of life, which he did, so much to her majesty's admiration, that she greatly regretted the disappointment of her own journey.

But at the breaking out of that rebellion which called the king to the north, when he

set up his royal standard at Nottingham, his majesty being on his march thither, and being told that he was not far from Gidding, graciously resolved to visit that place ; so, striking out of his way, he rode thither, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, together with his highness Prince Rupert, the Duke of Richmond, and many others of the valiant and loyal nobility, who attended them in that expedition. The king took a view of all with an inquisitive eye, and, in the midst of his perplexed affairs, spent some time in reading their harmonies of the Bible,\* while the prince and the lords refreshed themselves with such plain entertainment as the house in so great a surprise afforded.

They humbly presented his majesty with some devout books, which they had bound so neatly with their own hands, that the king was pleased to say he never saw such workmanship. At parting, he prayed the blessing of God might be upon them, and desired their

\* They compiled one of these for the use of the king, which is said to be in the library of St. John's College, Oxford.



heartly prayers, wherein they never failed him at the public services in their little church, till by the fury of their opponents they were driven away.

There can be no doubt that this visit of King Charles I. to Gidding was not during the lifetime of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar. Dr. Turner's narrative is not distinguished by much attention to chronological accuracy. He, however, affords one clue to the discovery of the date of this visit; whilst another biographer,\* and an historian† of those times, supply the deficiency.

Bishop Turner says, that the royal visit to Gidding occurred when his majesty was on his way to set up his standard at Nottingham; this, according to Clarendon, did not happen until the year 1639. It may also be observed, in confirmation of this statement, that Dr. Turner, in his narrative of the honours conferred on the Ferrar family, never mentions Mr. Ferrar, but states that *they* (the family then residing at Gidding) presented him with books, and afterwards, at his departure, his majesty desired *their* prayers. The king, as

\* Walton, in George Herbert.

† Clarendon.

will be seen in the next chapter, had, prior to his visit to Gidding, received two Scriptural Concordances, or Harmonies, from Mr. Ferrar, which his majesty highly prized and approved; and he held the family in great estimation.

Although curiosity may have been a powerful motive in bringing Charles to Gidding, yet we may believe that there was a good feeling in it, inasmuch as the bias of the heart is often developed by the objects to which curiosity tends for gratification. A visit to an establishment, avowedly framed and supported upon religious principles, would hardly be undertaken by an irreligious man at all, particularly if attended by any personal inconvenience; much less would it present any object of interest, inquiry, or gratification, for an irreligious king, and especially under the pressure of those embarrassing and harassing circumstances which distracted the mind of Charles at this time. It is almost impossible not to be charmed with the affable and condescending conduct of the king whilst there; and this, among many other records of his pious and amiable turn of mind, increases the regret, whilst it helps to confirm the truth of the

supposed paradox (expressed by a contemporary, and decided opponent of the king), that so *good a man* should make so bad a prince.

But, to return from this digression to the detail of the occasional visitors at Gidding. As Mr. Ferrar sometimes went to wait upon Bishop Williams as his diocesan at Buckden, so the bishop, as his old acquaintance, and as the visitor of the little academy, gave him his company several times at Gidding. Once he had a solemn invitation, in order to a confirmation, not only of the young people in the family who were not confirmed, but of the gentry, and others in the neighbourhood, who desired to avail themselves of this rite.

His lordship was complimented at the church with cathedral music, and care was taken that most of the choir of Peterborough came over on purpose. The bishop himself preached before the confirmation; and afterwards, with all his retinue, and the neighbouring divines and strangers, who were very numerous, partook of a splendid dinner at the manor-house; “for,” adds Dr. Turner, “the master of the house, notwithstanding his exemplary temperance and frugality, was not so

strait-laced as not to be a lover of hospitality, and knew there was a time for feasting as well as fasting. Yet," he continues, " I have been assured, scarce any of the servants were left at home, and only their great ovens were employed, which was a fine, cheap, easy way, he brought with him from Holland, of dressing meat, and such meat as the most curious palates there applauded, but admired how they cooked it."

The bishop surveyed the house; their order and manner of living he understood before, and highly approved of. At his departure, he gave them all his paternal benediction again, and affectionately embracing Mr. Ferrar, took his leave of him with this hearty good wish and prayer: " Deus tibi animum istum, et animo isti tempus longissimum concedat."

A transaction which came under the cognisance of Bishop Williams, probably about this time, raised the character of the Ferrars, if possible, higher than ever in his estimation, and displayed an illustrious example of conscientious feeling, nobly acted upon. The glebe at Gidding had been alienated, and a *composition* agreed upon, whereby the minister was to

be paid twenty pounds a-year as a compensation for glebe and tithes. But the wise purchaser, who wished to have the kingdom of heaven into the bargain, after a long search, at length discovered the number of acres that had once been glebe land; but it was impossible to find where those acres lay previous to the enclosure, which was made a hundred years before the Ferrars came to Gidding. Therefore Mr. Ferrar was never at rest till he procured a decree in chancery for allotting and laying out, in their lordship, the same number of acres for glebe, in the most convenient places.

Kennet's book on Improvements affords additional particulars of this transaction. "Take," he says, "one example of restoring tithes impropriate within the archdeaconry of Huntingdon, at Little Gidding, where the excellent family of the Ferrars lived in a perfectly religious society. They were known, says Dr. Hacket, to the bishop (Dr. John Williams, bishop of Lincoln) by right information, from the time that they sealed a charter among themselves, as it were, to be constant and regular in their spiritual discipline. But their

heavenly-mindedness was best discovered to him when two sons of Mrs. Ferrar, the mother and matron of the household, treated with the bishop to endow the church with the tithes which had been impropriated. This was in September 1633, as appears by what fell from the pen of the donor, Mrs. Ferrar, under that date :

“ RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

“ The expectation of opportunities having some years wheeled me off from the performance of this business, I now think it necessary to break through all impediments, and humbly to present to your lordship the desires and intentions of my heart, beseeching you, on God’s behalf, to take them into your fatherly consideration, and to give a speedy accomplishment to them, by the direction of your wisdom, and the assistance of your authority.”

Then follows the notice of restitution ; and the paper concludes with the following prayer :—

“ Be graciously pleased, Lord, now to accept from thine handmaid the restitution of

that which hath been unduly heretofore taken from thy ministers. And, as an earnest and pledge of her total resignation of herself and hers to thy service, vouchsafe to receive to the use of thy Church this small portion of that large estate which thou hast bestowed on her, the unworthiest of thy servants. Lord, redeem thy right, of which thou hast been too long disseised by the world, both in the possession and in the person of thine handmaid. And let this outward seizure of earth be accompanied with an inward surrender of the heart and spirit into thine own hands; so that the restorer, as well as that which is restored, may become and be confirmed thine inheritance." The bishop commended her freewill offering to God, and confirmed it.

Mrs. Ferrar did not long survive this act of restitution. She had, according to her own declaration affixed to the tablet in the great room, bidden adieu to all the fears and hopes of this world. Her faith would also have removed all fears concerning the next; and her hope, "a good hope through grace," would have afforded her the humble but comfortable assurance, that the victory over the grave being

accomplished, and death being deprived of its sting, the act of dying would but open the gate to the regions of that glory where the great Conqueror is gone to prepare places for his humble and faithful followers.

We are told by one who knew her (Bishop Lindsell), that she was eloquent, judicious, and wise; that few were equal to her in charity towards man, or piety towards God. Her zeal, activity, devotion, disinterestedness, and self-dedication to the service of God, these brief Memoirs have feebly developed: but what would be her *trust* at the last? Upon which of these ennobling qualities would she rest her ground of acceptance with God? Upon which would she desire to urge her plea for pardon and justification? Neither upon one, nor upon all, nor upon any thing short of the merits and righteousness of the crucified Redeemer and the interceding Saviour.

She loved, as all true Christians do, to glorify God in body and in spirit: she loved to let her light so shine before men, that they might see her good works, and glorify her Father which is in heaven. But when, at the end of a long and useful life, at the age of



about eighty-three, her body was committed to the grave, and her spirit returned to Him who gave it, what would be her boast when entering into the joy of her Lord? “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but *according to his mercy* he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” (Titus, iii. 5—7.)

## CHAPTER XI.

THE Scriptural Concordance or Harmony, to which allusion has twice been made in the course of these Memoirs, was a mechanical contrivance, said to have been since adopted by Dr. Priestley. Mr. Ferrar devoted one hour a-day to forming it. He directed his nieces to cut the various parables, miracles, &c. out of each Evangelist into separate slips, and arrange them, by frequent trials, in a connected form. This done, they were pasted down on sheets of paper; and so artificially was it performed, that it had the appearance of a new sort of printing; for every one that saw the books when they were finished, supposed them to have been printed, so exquisitely were all the pieces united and pressed. The frontispiece or title of the book was as follows: "The actions, doctrines, and other passages touching our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as they are related by the four Evangelists, reduced into one complete body of history, wherein that which is severally related by

them is expressed in their own words, by way of comparison, &c. &c.” In each page throughout the book pictures were inserted, representing the facts themselves, or their types or figures. The book was divided into one hundred and forty heads. By the care and judgment of Mr. Ferrar, the work grew daily into greater perfection. Mrs. Ferrar, during her lifetime, assisted in it, and became very expert in the arrangement.

The fame of this performance was so great, that the king, in one of his progresses, being at Apethorpe, seven miles from Gidding, despatched a gentleman, one of his attendants, to *entreat* (the very word used by the monarch) a sight of the Gospel Concordance, which, he heard, was so great a rarity; promising to send it back again ere many days should pass, after he had perused it. Mr. Ferrar was at this time, by an extraordinary urgency of business, called to London: the family consulted, and concluded that his majesty's pleasure ought to be readily obeyed, though they thought their humble effort unworthy the inspection of a king. The gentleman, apprehending some demur about the delivery of the book, protested

that if he had it not then, the king, before he slept, would send him again for it. The book was accordingly delivered to him, and conveyed to the monarch.

It was not, however, a few *days*, but several *months* before the same gentleman brought back the book from the king, who was pleased to send him with it on purpose from London to Gidding. He acquainted the family, on his arrival, that he had many things in charge from the king his master to say to them. First, to give them his majesty's hearty thanks for lending him the book; then to signify his great good liking of it; then to excuse him for not sooner returning it, and for writing his own remarks upon many places in the margin: the gentleman adding, that the king took such delight in it, that no day passed wherein he did not spend some time in reading and noting it. "Lastly," said he, "I am to request you, from his majesty, that he may have one of these books for his own use." Whereupon the ladies of the household set about it, and in a year's time finished one for the king, binding it with their own hands, after a fashion new and extraordinary.

The book was presented by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Laud), and Dr. Cosin, the then Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge. The king admired it for the rare contrivance of the mechanical part within and without, as well as for its curious embellishments ; but, above all, for the exquisite method which brought the Gospel history into the most perfect harmony that was ever framed. After a full view, he was pleased to say,—it was a present fit for the greatest king upon earth : and then turning to his Grace of Canterbury, he said, “ What think you, my lord, shall I obtain a second favour of these good people ? I have another suit to them. The matter is this : I often read over the lives and actions of the kings of Judah and Israel, in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and I find in them some difficulty in reconciling them together. I should desire that these good people should make me such a book, as would bring these two books into one full and perfect history ; and yet so, that I may at the same time see them each severally and apart to be read. They will, I know, readily understand my mind : will you let them know my pleasure ? ” The archbishop and Dr. Cosin

assured the king it should be done ; and intimation thereof being sent to Gidding, the family cheerfully, and without delay, commenced the work. It was completely finished in another year, bound up in purple velvet, richly gilded, and presented by Mr. John Ferrar's own hand to the king, who, in the meantime, had frequently inquired when his book would be ready.

The king, upon the sight and perusal of it, expressed himself most graciously in these words : “ This book, in all kinds, surpasses my hopes, and is done in a far more excellent way of composition than I conceived it could have been done. I shall make it my companion : herein I shall daily behold God's infinite mercies and his just judgments ; his rewarding of the good kings, his punishing of the evil kings ; his promises and threatenings surely accomplished. Now I must needs say I have gained a treasure ! Their care, their skill, and their cost, have been superlative, and so let them know my esteem of it.” After much discourse about it, and regarding their way of living, the king concluded thus : “ How happy a prince were I, if there were many such

families in my kingdom, who would employ themselves as these do at Gidding!" The title of the book was this: "The history of the Israelites, from the death of King Saul to their carrying away captive into Babylon. Collected out of the books of Kings and Chronicles, in the words of the texts themselves, without any alteration of importance by addition to them, or diminution from them; whereby first all the actions and passages, in either of the books of Kings and Chronicles, whether jointly or severally, are reduced into the body of one complete narrative." They were also digested into an orderly dependence upon one another; some difficult passages were cleared, and some seeming differences between the sacred records reconciled; and all was so contrived, that notwithstanding this mutual composition of the books of Kings and Chronicles in this historical collection, yet the form of each of them was preserved entire, and in such a manner that they might easily be led severally and distinctly from first to last.

Another subject of compilation may here be noticed, to which Mr. Ferrar did not scorn to descend. It was one of the modes in which

he relieved the more solemn employments at Gidding, and mingled amusement with instruction. The manor-house was not a house of mourning, and the master of it had ever an air of sweetness and cheerfulness in his very aspect; so he took care to provide for its inmates useful and delightful entertainment.

If any pitied them, as some did the primitive Christians, because they saw no plays, nor ever were seen upon the theatre; yet, without the danger of being at all corrupted, they were equally diverted, and better instructed, by certain interludes, dialogues, or discourses, selected by Mr. Ferrar, and recited by the younger persons of the house. These innocent and profitable recreations he introduced, to wean his family from the Christmas games, and wilder sports, which could hardly subsist without some disorder or extravagance. On All Saints' day they began, and at Christmas they proceeded, on every holyday, gracefully to repeat and represent occurrences taken from ancient and modern historians, in opposition to the legends of the Church of Rome. These Mr. Ferrar formed into colloquies, with forcible application of all to their own circumstances; and



for that very reason, because they were so adapted to the private constitution of the family, the books themselves (which were two or three large folios) were not suited for publication, although Dr. Turner asserts that they “were well, and properly, and elegantly worded.” Mr. Ferrar himself compiled them, and wrote them with his own hand, to be transcribed by the actors who had parts in them; and his main scope and aim was to expose and confute the vulgar errors, and worse practices, of a sinful age and nation, notwithstanding the many forms and visors of godliness in which persons of both sexes, and of all conditions and qualities, disguised themselves to themselves, as well as to others; and then to represent and press upon his family the true knowledge and practice of things really Christian, however disused and decried. In one word, to urge the duty of *mortification*, especially of the *affections* and *appetites*; meaning by *affections*, pride of every kind, ambition, envy, covetousness, anger; and by *appetites*, all inordinate pleasures, as gluttony, drunkenness, lust, and sloth.

The only work which Mr. Ferrar published was his translation of “Divine Considerations,”

by Juan Valdes. This very rare book is in the possession of the editor of these Memoirs. It was first published in 1638 ; and that, as well as a subsequent edition put forth in 1646, contains a recommendatory preface, and notes on the text, by the excellent Mr. George Herbert.

Walton tells us that “ Ferrar’s and Herbert’s devout lives were both so noted, that the general report of their sanctity gave them occasion to renew that slight acquaintance which was begun at Cambridge ; and this holy friendship was long maintained without any interview, but only by loving and endearing letters. One testimony,” he adds, “ of their friendship and pious designs, may appear by Mr. Ferrar’s commending the *Considerations of John Valdesso, or Valdes*, a book which he had translated out of Spanish into English, to be examined and censured [criticised] by Mr. Herbert, before it was made public ; which excellent book Mr. Herbert did read, and return with many marginal notes, as they are now printed with it ; and with them, Herbert’s affectionate letter to Ferrar.” Juan Valdes was one of those worthies whose honour it was to be denounced by the Inquisition. He was the author

of some works on religious subjects. One of them, the "Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," is prohibited in the Index of heretical works. He was tried on account of this treatise and *another*, which was found among the papers of Don Bartholomew Carranza de Miranda, theologian to Charles V., but who, being charged with Lutheran sentiments, such as doubting of purgatory, despising papal bulls, and preaching on the justification of men by a lively faith in the passion and death of Jesus Christ, was also persecuted by the *holy* office. The work, supposed at first to be Carranza's, but which, in fact, was the composition of Valdes, is called "Thoughts on the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures." Valdes was also the author of another production, called "Acharo." All these works were stigmatised and proscribed as being Lutheran, and the author was declared to be a formal heretic.

Valdes left Spain, and thus escaped imprisonment. In 1559, Fray Lewis de la Cruz, a prisoner in the Inquisition of Valladolid, declared that Valdes was living in Naples; that his "Thoughts," &c., had been sent twenty

years before to Carranza, in the form of a letter ; but that the work had its origin in the Christian Institutes of Thaulero. Fray Dominic de Roxas (another prisoner in the Inquisition) spoke of Valdes as the secretary of Charles V. ; if that were the case, he must have been called Juan Antonio de Valdes. Izaak Walton asserts the latter opinion respecting Valdes. He says, that for his learning and virtue he was much beloved by Charles V., whom he had followed in all his long and dangerous wars ; and when Valdes grew old, and wearied both of wars and of the world, he declared to the emperor that his resolution was, to decline his service, and betake himself to a contemplative life, “ because there ought to be a vacancy betwixt fighting and dying.” Charles desired Valdes to consider well of what he had said, and to keep his purpose within his own breast, till they two might have a second opportunity of a friendly discourse, which Valdes promised to do. In the meantime, Charles appointed privately a day for him and Valdes to meet again ; and after pious and free discourse, they both agreed on a certain day to receive the sacrament of the Lord’s supper

publicly, and appointed an eloquent and devout friar to preach a sermon “on contempt of the world, and on the happiness and benefit of a quiet and contemplative life,” which he did; and afterwards the emperor took occasion to declare openly, “that the preacher had begot in him a resolution to lay down his dignities, and to forsake the world,” &c. “He pretended that he had persuaded Valdes to do the like; but this is most certain, that after Philip returned from England, then did the emperor and Valdes perform their resolution. In his retirement Valdes wrote his ‘Divine Considerations,’ and other treatises of worth, which want a second Mr. Ferrar to procure and translate them.” This account of Valdes, Izaak Walton received from a friend, who had it from the mouth of Mr. Ferrar. The editor will prolong this digression by observing, that in the work alluded to, much is to be discovered of the energy of Divine grace moving upon an enlightened mind, and evinced in Christian experience. This experience is always the same. The person who goes to the word of God in search of truth, *believing it to be there*, anxious to find it, and with a mind unprejudiced by the

systems of men, will in all ages arrive at the same conclusions. He may differ with others about non-essentials; but the mortification of sin, and renewal unto holiness, is the one thing which he sees needful—the good part which he chooses, and strives and prays for. It is “a sign” by which, in the language of Valdes, “he may know himself to be a son of God.” The young and tempted Christian may derive encouragement from Valdes’s view of *gradual sanctification*; and all who read his book may admire and adore the goodness and unchangeableness of God, who, with all the diversity of “gifts,” “administrations,” and “operations,” is still in all ages “the same Lord” and “the same Spirit,” working the same experience in the hearts of all who are called “from darkness into his marvellous light.”

Walton affords also some interesting particulars regarding the publication of another book, better known than that of Valdes, and of which Mr. George Herbert was the author, and Mr. Ferrar the editor. Herbert, when in a decaying state of body, having expressed, to a mutual friend of his and Ferrar’s, his complete resignation to the Divine will—that he

was "even pleased with his want of health," and that he waited "his appointed change with hope and patience," added, "I pray, deliver this little book to my dear brother Ferrar, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could submit to the will of Jesus my Master, in whose service I have now found perfect freedom. Desire him to read it; and then, if he think it may turn to the advantage of any poor dejected soul, let it be made public: if not, let him burn it; for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies."

This book bears the name of "The Temple; or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations:" of which Mr. Ferrar said, "there was in it the picture of a divine soul in every page;" and, that "the whole book was such a harmony of holy passions, as would enrich the world with pleasure and piety."

When Mr. Ferrar sent this book to Cambridge to be licensed for the press, the vice-chancellor objected to the verses,

"Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,  
Ready to pass to the American strand:"

and refused to allow its publication unless they were expunged. Mr. Ferrar, on the other hand, would not consent to the book being printed without them. This produced some arguments for and against their publication; but at last the vice-chancellor said, “ I know Mr. Herbert well, and I know that he had many heavenly speculations, and was a *divine poet*; but I hope the world will not take him for an *inspired prophet*: and therefore I license the whole book.” Thus was it published, without the diminution or addition of a syllable; Mr. Ferrar only contributing the preface, which is usually printed with the book.



## CHAPTER XII.

It was a maxim of Juan Valdes, whose "Divine Considerations" have been adverted to, that "by mortification a man maintains himself in his Christian resolutions;" that is, "in such sort as faith and the Holy Spirit do mortify the affections and appetites of a man to maintain him in those resolutions, which, through his vocation, he hath made with the world and with himself."

Mr. Ferrar seems not only to have studied the letter of Valdes's Considerations, but also to have imbibed their spirit; for it is recorded of him, that he had gradually brought his habits of mind and body into extraordinary subjection, "even," in the language of his biographer, "to obey him as he pleased."

He was able to spend eighteen hours of the twenty-four in useful business, serious study, devout prayer, or heavenly meditation. He habituated himself to sit seldom by the fire, or indeed to sit at all in his study: walking, or

standing at a desk to read or write, was commonly his posture ; and many things he penned all the while kneeling upon his knees. During the lifetime of his mother, she frequently and earnestly entreated him to abate his rigour in watching, until he abundantly satisfied her; that, as it was of the greatest refreshment and advantage to his soul, so it was quite harmless to his body ; and that he had a constitution more liable to be endangered by the least excess of sleeping or eating, than by the austerities which she deprecated.

But after the death of Mrs. Ferrar (who, as his mother, and the venerable foundress and governess of their religious house, overruled him to a little more indulgence of himself), he seldom went to bed above once a-week. He was accustomed merely to lie down upon the floor wrapped in a gown of black frieze, and with a bear's skin under him : yet he felt no decay of his strength in the last seven years of his life, and his health was rather improving than impairing in the midst of all his austerities.

Although he was very far removed from that volatile character which is ever unfixed and un-

steady, yet would he never prolong his studies or employments to a wearisome length, but rather, as far as accidental occasions would allow, vary his pursuits, and apportion certain hours of the day and night to different avocations. This he found less exhausting to mind and body. The change afforded not only relief, but a new pleasure and refreshment at every turn. It must, however, be mentioned, that when occasion required, he could firmly set himself, day and night, to the performance of any task, and never relax until he could say, "It is done."

Mr. Ferrar's attachment to the Established Church, and reverence for ecclesiastical discipline, was a remarkable feature in his character. He had also *antipathies* as strongly marked, perhaps, as these *commendable predilections*. He had conceived a hearty detestation of the Roman mass, and this out of his pure affection to God's honour and worship, which he (having resided some years in popish countries) observed to be mortally wounded by the idolatrous adoration of that which he thought many persons could not, and did not, believe to be the body and blood of Christ.

On one occasion, in the honest and uncompromising indignation of his heart, he said, "that such a sacrifice profaned the very place wherein it was celebrated;" upon which one of the company replied, "Why, sir, what if mass should be celebrated in your house without your leave or knowledge, what would you do?"—"I will tell you a story," said he. "A peer of France, who had been long a pensioner\* of Spain, being discovered, and flying for refuge to the Spanish court, the king, upon his arrival, instantly despatched his secretary to a certain duke and grandee of Spain, entreating him to lend a palace of his for the accommodation of the fugitive nobleman. 'Tell the king,' said he, 'my house shall ever be at his majesty's service;' and when the secretary was returning to court with this obliging answer—"Nay," said the duke, 'stay and hear me out. As soon as ever the house is mine again, to do what I will with it, I will purge it in such a manner that the world shall ring of it; for I will burn it down to the ground, rather than it shall be said hereafter that there harboured a

\* A political pensioner—a spy.

traitor under that roof.”—“ But, sir,” said the person whose conversation occasioned the warmth of Mr. Ferrar’s address, “ do you account the mass so great a traitor, that you would burn your house if it was said there?” “ I say not so,” answered Ferrar; “ for I have not a purse to build another: but I tell you, since you put it to me, *I would pull down that room, though I built another.*” This was a sally of his zeal; and it is mentioned as one confutation of that obloquy, which malice, as impotent as virulent, endeavoured to fasten upon him, that he was no enemy to popery, because so much a friend to a retired way of living.

Mr. Ferrar possessed extraordinary discernment in the discovery of character. His friends would often say he knew them better than they knew themselves. If he conversed but a few times with persons who did not designedly disguise themselves, he would see far into their dispositions, and find how to work upon their passions; and then he would gently ply them with such effectual persuasions to better things, and would use such apt methods to dissuade and reclaim them, if they were out of the way, that he seldom failed, in some measure, to gain his

point. Besides, he was a man without fear in an honest cause, and without any partial affection, and would not strain his conscience, though all the world might be immediately applied to heal it. If any one attended him for his advice in an affair of importance (and he was the oracle of his friends), if the time and place would allow, he would write down in brief the substance of what they proposed; then he would set down his answer, accompanied by advice and reasons for approving or disliking their proposition. He found by experience, that, delivering his mind in a short written note, especially to his country tenants when they came to consult with him, saved a great deal of time, prevented tedious and unprofitable conversation, allayed passions, and removed misunderstandings. Another practice of Mr. Ferrar was to transcribe and retain copies of all letters of any consequence, though addressed to an ordinary friend. And such a master of insinuation was he for the good of souls, that he would scarcely ever indite a letter, though a very short one, without introducing in it something tending to promote the most excellent ends, and that with such judg-

ment, prudence, and courtesy, besides weight and seriousness, as would not fail to be well received. He would frequently say, the world was in great error in not taking the right way to do good, by a diffusive charity; that it was our Saviour's proverb, "it is more blessed to give than to receive;" but that Satan was the author of that selfish proverb, in the sense in which it is commonly used, "Charity begins at home."

Their alms at Little Gidding, besides their charity upon casualties, were so much every day to poor housekeepers in the neighbourhood of the manor, who were all admitted into a lower room, whither Mr. Ferrar himself came to see them served, to administer spiritual as well as bodily comforts to them all, and to inquire who were sick in any of the neighbouring villages, that he might send to relieve them. He had a singular dexterity in reproof, which he usually did by the relation of some anecdote, the application of which *to themselves* was easy; and as he had an admirable faculty of advising others, whilst he seemed to ask their advice, so it is well known that he was most happy in applying the best remedies

to wounded consciences, which was one great and chief end of his studies ; and with his most affectionate efforts, he would assist persons in their distresses, until he had, as it were, become the means of begetting them anew unto God,—he understood it the better, from having undergone in his own tender age many and grievous temptations.

Dr. Lindsell, once his tutor, and ever his admirer, observing how daily more and more refined and exalted was his practice of all Christian virtues, would sometimes ask him to what lengths he would go, and what examples he would set them ? “ Nay, sir,” he would reply, “ *you* are to answer this ; why did you, at college, set me to read the lives of the fathers, and of later saints in England, if not to follow them ?”

He frequently penned excellent prayers for several occasions, some only as short collects, others of considerable length, composed on some memorable domestic family and other occurrences. He employed one of his nephews in translating from the Italian the prayers of Mynsinger, a large collection in folio, for all sorts and conditions of men. In the prayers



of his own composition, whilst he begged new blessings with all imaginable acknowledgments of the old which he had already received, he always interwove such clear instructions as might teach every one their duties in all good works.

Regarding extemporaneous prayers, he used to say, there needed little other confutation of that opinion or practice, than to take them in short-hand and shew them some time after to the very man who had used them. "Ask," said he, "their own judgment of them (for I think they will hardly know them again), and see if they do not blame them."

To a certain extent Mr. Ferrar was right. Prayer was no doubt in his days, and is now, sometimes unquestionably poured forth in language so familiar, confused, and presumptuous, as to be altogether unsuitable to the expression of a needy, dependent, and sinful creature addressing a Being of infinite holiness and sovereign majesty, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." But the *abuse* of a practice does not justify its *disuse*. It does not follow, because some of the Puritans of the seventeenth century *sometimes* prayed amiss, or the

fanatics of the nineteenth century pray presumptuously, that humble, judicious, sober, hearty-believing extemporary prayer should be abandoned altogether. Many clergymen and others, ministers as well as laymen, have doubtless found that no written form of prayer could be made to bear with such heart-touching effect upon the state and character of those whom they visit in sickness or sorrow, as those extemporary outpourings of supplication, founded upon a knowledge of the case of the sufferer.

And so also in family worship there are seasons and occurrences which occasionally call forth a more particular and personal expression of praise, prayer, or submission, than can be found in any printed form, however excellent. As to private prayer, what *mere form* can express the varied sensations of a heart sometimes almost sinking under its own bitterness; at other times shuddering at its own deadness; now abashed and trembling at its own sinfulness; and then rejoicing "in the Lord" for merciful providences, for pardoning grace, and for redeeming love? "O," exclaimed a venerable minister of the Gospel of

Christ, “ the sublimity of prayer ! How it dignifies those who are continually found in it ! It is indeed a wondrous grace, teaching us to address God in his own way. What I say, he dictates ! My words of prayer, though polluted by the breath I breathe, still, blessed be his name ! go up an unpolluted sacrifice by Christ. I put my prayers into the Redeemer’s hand ; he pardons and purifies what is mine, takes them spotless to his Father’s throne, and they are answered by innumerable blessings. . . . It is a poor thing to have strong words and weak desires ; but it is a blessing indeed when, though the words may be feeble, the desires are strong. . . . The Pharisees were to receive ‘ the greater damnation ’ for their prayers ; so is our condemnation obvious, when we have nothing to bring before God but words. Blessed is the man who knows how to whisper out to God the inmost secrets of the soul.”\*

At a period when a strict adherence to liturgical forms, in public and private, was among many persons a test of truth and loyalty, we may make allowances for aversions to any de-

\* *Mature Reflections, &c.* of the Rev. Rowland Hill in his old age, by the Rev. Edwin Sidney.

viation from those forms; hence it may be understood, that Mr. Ferrar's objection to extemporary prayer arose more from the peculiar character of the times in which he lived, and the frequent abuse of the practice, than from any thing wrong in that style of prayer itself.

The occasional and judicious use of extemporary prayer is altogether compatible with the highest veneration for our scriptural and beautiful liturgy. Some of the brightest ornaments of our church, among the prelacy and clergy, have practised it. Not to speak of living prelates who approve of it, did not Bishop Wilkins write a treatise on the gift of prayer? And as to the good and great Usher, he was celebrated for the fervency, fluency, and copiousness of his extemporary prayers.

It has been remarked, that extemporary prayer, either alone or in connexion with liturgical forms, constitutes the worship of all the reformed churches, at home or abroad; so that the practice of those ministers of the church of England who reject it altogether, and the prejudice which prevails against it in this country, are peculiar to ourselves, and unknown every where else.

The great affection and veneration Mr. Ferrar had for our liturgy appeared by his own daily and devout reading of it; and the frequent and reverent use of it, he justly believed to be one of the most likely expedients to gain over its adversaries.

No man was better pleased with a decent splendour in the house of God, nor was any one more elevated with our solemn service, performed with good and grave cathedral music, of which his travels in Italy made him a perfect judge; he used it in his house, and he built, in the church, a gallery, in which he set up an organ.

His reverence for and attachment to the Psalms has been mentioned: he made it his great endeavour to promote the learning of the whole Psalter without book, not only by the young people, but by the elder sort; and he was accustomed to engage the proper classes, parents as well as children, in this profitable task, on purpose to redeem them from their vain thoughts and conversation, and to make the repetition of these sacred hymns, without interrupting the performance of any other necessary duty, honest employment, or inno-

cent recreation, the subject of their mutual discourses. In like manner he used earnestly to recommend committing to memory the Gospel of our blessed Lord, and more, if they could, of the New Testament: this, he would say, was as needful food to our souls as meat is to our bodies, which a man is to get by the sweat of his brow; “for who knows,” said he, “how he may be disposed of before he dies? Suppose blind, suppose in a prison, or travelling where he can have no help but from his memory! No man,” he added, “till he has tried, can imagine the comfort and advantage he may derive from such a good treasure in his heart.”

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## CHAPTER XIII.

IN the autumn of 1637, Mr. Ferrar, perceiving in himself some inward faintness, and apprehending that it was an indication of the breaking up of his bodily health, broke off abruptly from writing any farther on a subject which was at that time under his consideration. This breaking off is yet to be seen in an unfinished treatise, still extant, with his reason for discontinuing it. He then began to write down *Contemplations on Death*, in the following words:

“The remembrance of death is very powerful to restrain us from sinning. For he who shall well consider that the day will come (and he knoweth not how soon) when he shall be laid upon a sick bed, weak and faint, without ease and almost without strength, encompassed with melancholy thoughts, and overwhelmed with anguish ; when, on one side, his distemper increasing upon him, the physician tells him that he is past all hope of life ; and, on the other, his friends urge him to dispose of his

worldly goods, and share his wealth among them—that wealth which he procured with trouble, and preserved with anxiety; that wealth which he now parts from with sorrow;—when again the priest calls upon him to take the preparatory measures for his departure; when he himself now begins to be assured that here he hath no abiding city; that this is no longer a world for him; that no more suns will rise and set upon him; that for him there will be no more seeing, no more hearing, no more speaking, no more touching, no more tasting, no more fancying, no more understanding, no more remembering, no more desiring, no more loving, no more delights of any sort to be enjoyed by him; but that death will at one stroke deprive him of all these things; that he will speedily be carried out of the house which he had called his own, and is now become another's; that he will be put into a cold narrow grave; that earth will be consigned to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust;—let any man duly and daily ponder these things, and how can it be that he should dare”——Here the strength of the writer failed him, and his essay is left thus unfinished.



In the beginning of November he found that his weakness and faintness increased; yet on the first Friday in that month he went to church, and officiated for the last time. The same day he sent for his friend, the clergyman of Great Gidding, whom he then requested to come every day and read prayers for him; "For," said he, "it is my first care that the service of my God be not one day neglected by those who can go to church; and I know that I shall not be able to perform my part there any more." His family had now very sad and dreadful apprehensions about him, which being discernible in their looks, he exhorted them to patience and resignation. Some of them urging him to declare the reasons upon which he spoke so confidently of the time of his dissolution being at hand: "To satisfy you," he replied, "I shall give you one reason: in all former sicknesses I have ever had a strong desire to live, and an earnestness to pray God to spare me, which he has hitherto done, even when all hopes of life were past, by the judgment of a most skilful physician: and I may farther say, to the glory of his great name, I never earnestly set myself to beg any thing of

God but he fulfilled the petition of his unworthy servant. But now, of late, I have not any inclination to beg longer life of God; nay, I rather desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ." A general decay of bodily health and strength grew upon him, but all the powers of his soul were as active and lively as at any time during his most vigorous health. On the first Sunday in November, he received with great desire and devotion the holy communion, making a most solemn confession of his faith and trust in Jesus; renouncing all pretence of meriting any thing, and saying, when men had done all, they must truly acknowledge themselves to be "unprofitable servants." The divine who administered to him declared he had never heard so excellent a Christian confession of faith, and he thought he should never hear the like again.

Mr. Ferrar passed the days and nights in heavenly counsels to the family, and earnestly exhorted them to persevere in the way he had pointed out; and addressing himself particularly to his brother, said, "My dear brother, I must now shortly appear before God, and give an account of what I have taught this family.

And here, with a safe conscience, I can say, that I have delivered nothing to you but what I have thought agreeable to his word: therefore, abide steadily by what I have taught. Worship God in spirit and in truth. I will use no more words. One thing, however, I must add, that you may be both forewarned and prepared: *sad times are coming on, very sad times indeed; you will live to see them.*”\* Then, grasping his brother’s hand, he said, “Oh, my brother! I pity you, who must see these dreadful alterations. And when you shall see the true worship of God brought to nought, and suppressed, then look and fear that desolation is nigh at hand. And in this great trial, may God of his infinite mercy support and deliver you!”

He persuaded the family to adhere to the doctrine and practice of the Church of England; “to persevere in that good old way,” were his very words: for having set himself firmly for

\* When some farmers near Gidding, somewhat before his death, desired longer leases of the lands which they rented, he intimated that *seven years* would be long enough. “Troublesome times were coming,” he said; and they might thank God if they enjoyed them so long in peace.”—BARNABAS OLEY’S *Life of George Herbert*.

scriptural, primitive Christianity, *he counted popery, as well as puritanism, arrant novelty.* He admonished the younger persons of his household, whom he looked upon as suns in the high noon of their Christian course, and which had compassed much of heaven already, that there was as much more of it before their eyes, which must also be the travail of their souls: and stooping to the capacities of the children (his sister's children), he strove to leave deepening impressions of the love, and fear, and service of God upon their tender dispositions, reminding them to keep their psalms and gospels in their *hearts*: setting before their eyes how many blessings God would return upon them, and fervently calling upon the Lord to keep them in his holy protection.

Three days before his death, at about eight o'clock in the morning, he summoned all his family around him, and addressed his brother John to this effect: "Brother, I would have you go to the church, and at the west end, at the door where we enter the church, I would have you measure from the steps seven feet to the westward, and at the end of those seven feet, *there* let my grave be made." His brother

stood almost drowned in tears, as in truth were all the standers-by: indeed, never had a family more cause to bewail a loss. Mr. Ferrar continued: "Brother, that *first* place of the length of seven feet I leave for *your* burying place; you are my *elder* brother: God, I hope, will let you there take up your resting-place till we all rise again in joy." When his brother returned, saying it was done as he desired; "Then go," he added, "and remove from my study those three large hampers full of books, that stand there locked up these many years. They are comedies, tragedies, heroic poems, and romances: let them be carried to the place marked out for my grave, and *there*, upon it, *see you burn them all* immediately." And this he uttered with some vehemence and indignation, adding, "Go, brother; let it be done, let it be done; and then come again all of you to me."

These books had been carefully locked up ever since the family had taken up their abode at Gidding, in order that no one should make use of them or see them. There were many hundreds, in several languages, which Mr. Ferrar had procured at different places in his

travels, some of them with much search and cost.

His orders were obeyed; the vain things which once had charmed him were sacrificed over the spot which was to receive his mortal remains; and the smoke and flame of this biblical holocaust, as they burst out from the place of conflagration, and flared from the eminence on which the house and church stood, excited the attention and alarm of the neighbourhood, and drew together very many persons, who imagined a destructive fire was happening at Gidding.

When the people saw what was doing, they went away, and reported that Mr. Ferrar was dying, and his books burning. Within a few days the report of this transaction had assumed another feature, and it was currently asserted in the neighbouring market towns, that he could not die in peace until he had burned all his books of magic and conjuration. This absurd story was circulated with much industry, and received with avidity; and persons who evidently desired to prejudice the minds of the ignorant against Mr. Ferrar, and shake, if possible, his reputation for sanctity, wrote and got

the report dispersed and spread abroad far and wide.

In his earlier years he had found these books very bewitching, in drawing him aside by their fascinations from that steady and mental obedience to the truth, which even in youth he loved. He had felt the sorcery of their insidious power, and he would now execute a judgment of zeal upon them, as the early converts to Christ did at Ephesus; for we read, "many which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men." A renowned Italian wit, Æneas Sylvius, who was afterwards Pope of Rome, by the name of Pius the Second, having in his youth publicly set forth some offensive things, retracted them in his old age, entreating all men to prefer his latter counsels to his early rashness; and our noble Sidney, on his death-bed, gave orders that his "Arcadia" should be suppressed and consumed to ashes, lest it might prove an incentive to amorous passions: in like manner our dying saint of Gidding, who long before was dead to the censure of the world, and had no longer any human thoughts of life about it, realised the generous shame which the remem-

brance of youthful predilections created; and when his brother returned from doing execution by fire upon the offensive volumes, and assured him that they were all burnt, he sat up in his bed, and poured out his soul in hearty thanksgivings to Almighty God. He desired that this act might be considered as the testimony of his disapprobation of all such productions, as tending to corrupt the mind of man, and improper for the perusal of every good and sincere Christian.

Many divines in the neighbourhood came to visit Mr. Ferrar, or rather to learn of him how to behave with an humble greatness of mind under a similar dispensation: first he would entreat them to join in some prayers with him, and then proceed to such discourse as was fitting for dying men. One visitor, during Mr. Ferrar's last illness, used language of this kind: "Sir, what joy may you now have of the many alms-deeds you have done!" And then he was proceeding to enumerate some of them; but the good man unceremoniously cut him short. "What! speak you of such things?" he said; "it had been but a suitable return for me to have given all I had,



instead of scattering a few crumbs here and there : *God, forgive me !*”

Another person, standing by his bed-side, read from the “ Visitation of the Sick,” as prescribed in the liturgy of the established church, “ and for what cause soever this sickness is sent unto you, whether it be to try your patience for the example of others, or,” he went on, “ *for our punishment.*” At the unauthorised addition of these words Mr. Ferrar was much displeased, beseeching him to speak at that rate no more, for he was “ a most miserable sinner.”

Once, during his sickness, overhearing his elder brother bewailing his and the family’s infinite loss, if this man of God should be taken from them, and in his excess of grief concluding thus, “ Alas ! what will become of us poor sheep, if the shepherd be taken away ? ”—his profound humility was so deeply wounded, that they should put so much of their trust in him, rather than in the living God, that, calling his brother to his bed-side, he said, with great energy, “ Oh, my brother ! what mean you by using that undue expression ? Go, I pray you,

to the church, humble thyself, and fast this day, and ask of God to forgive thee."

On the return of the next Lord's day, he found himself more and more declining; and heartily wishing to be released, he fervently prayed, "Why stay I here, Lord, any longer, who can do so little now but take my ease and sleep? Lord, in thy good time receive my soul." And amidst other divine sentences out of the Psalms, this he repeated almost in every breath: "Haste thee, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O God!"

This Lord's day was the first Sunday in the month, the constant day for their monthly communion; therefore he requested the minister, that after he had celebrated the Lord's supper in the church, he would come home and consecrate again for him; "since now the heavenly table was his only support, for he had done with the earthly."

When the clergyman advanced to give him the sacred emblems, he first entreated the prayer of absolution, having again made a full and lively profession of his faith and state of soul; and then, with most exalted affection, re-

ceived them, and afterwards offered up his very humble thanks for that most inestimable benefit, uttering to the same purpose many powerful and divine words, as one who had no longer any human thoughts about him. But afterwards he applied himself again to the work in which he had resolved to live and die; and that was, confirming his family in the ways of piety; more especially directing this his last discourse to his most beloved disciples, his two nieces, that they should be stedfast, and commit themselves to the guidance of their Lord God and Jesus Christ their Master. After midnight, having lain very still for a considerable time, he spoke a little, and observing that those about him did not distinctly hear him, he said, with a loud voice, "What, does my speech fail? Oh, sweet Jesus, let it not fail me to the last, I beseech thee!" Then, being asked whether the clergymen should be called, who not long before had left his chamber, supposing he had been asleep, he said, "Entreat them to come and pray together." When they came in, he desired them to say the prayer for a dying man; which ended, and they inquiring how he did, he

answered, " Pretty well, I thank my God and you, and *I shall be better;*" then he lay motionless for about half an hour, the family and ministers standing about his bed, supposing him to be in a refreshing slumber, when suddenly casting his hands out of the bed with great strength, and looking up and round about him, he exclaimed, with a strong and cheerful voice, " Oh, what a blessed change is here—what do I see?—what do I see? Oh, let us come and sing and praise the Lord, and magnify his holy name together : I have been at a great feast : Oh, magnify the Lord with me." One of his nieces said, " At a feast, dear father?" " Yes," he replied, " at the great King's feast;" and this he uttered with a sound and perfect accent, as if he had ailed nothing. While all stood somewhat amazed, and unwilling to interrupt him, if he should say more, he laid himself down quietly, and putting his hands under the bed-covering, stretched them out by his sides and closed his eyes.

The clergy again went to prayers ; all kneeled around his bed ; the officiating minister had arrived at that part of the supplication

wherein he implored the Lord, that “he would be pleased to send his holy angels and convey the soul of the departing man to its abode in the heavens;” even whilst these words were uttered, he opened his lips, and gave one gasp; after which, not once stirring or moving hand or foot, he rendered up his soul to be carried in the hands of angels to the rest of the Lord Jesus. At that instant the clock struck one, the hour at which he had constantly risen every morning to praise God, and to pray to him; and at that *very hour* his Almighty Father called him to his heavenly kingdom, to praise him with an innumerable company of angels, and with the spirits of just men made perfect; and, as one of the company said, “he ended the Christian Sabbath here upon earth, to begin the everlasting one in heaven.”

On the Thursday following, his remains were deposited in a vault at the west end of the church, as he had appointed. The burial service was read, and a sermon preached on the occasion by the Dean of Ely.

Dr. Peckard, one of Nicholas Ferrar’s biographers, says, “That he was eminently pious

towards God, benevolent towards man, and perfectly sincere in all his dealings; that he was industrious beyond his strength, and indefatigable in what he thought his duty; that he was blessed by Providence with uncommon abilities, and by unremitted exertion of his various talents attained many valuable accomplishments, is very manifest, and is the least that can be said in his praise; and, though greatly to his honour, is yet no more than that degree of excellence which may have been attained by many. But the spiritual exaltation of mind, by which he rose above all earthly considerations of advantage, and devoted himself entirely to God—whom, in the strictest sense, he loved with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength—being united to the active virtues of a citizen of the world, gives him a peculiar pre-eminence even among those who excel in virtue. For though he practised self-denial to the utmost, and exercised religious severities upon himself scarcely inferior to those of the recluses of old, yet he did not, like them, by a solitary and morose retirement, deprive himself of the power continually to do good, but led a life of active

virtue and benevolence. His youth was spent in an incessant application to learned studies, and the time of his travel was given to the acquisition of universal wisdom. On his return home, in conducting the affairs of an important establishment, he displayed uncommon abilities, integrity, and spirit. As a member of the House of Commons, he gained distinguished honour, and was appointed the principal manager to prosecute and bring to justice the great man and corrupt minister of that time. And having thus discharged the duties of a virtuous citizen, he devoted the rest of his life to the instruction of youth, to works of Christian charity, and to the worship of God in a religious retirement, while he was yet in possession of his health and strength, and in the prime of manhood; that, like the great author who was his daily and nightly study and admonition, the royal Psalmist, he might not sacrifice to God that which cost him nothing. In one word, he was a rare example of that excellence in which are blended all the brilliant qualities of the great man, with all the amiable virtues of the good."

The Right Reverend Dr. Turner, *another* of

his biographers, says of Nicholas Ferrar, "His wisdom was the most admirable thing in him:"—and truly it may be added, because it was of the best sort.

In the wisdom of Nicholas Ferrar we find, not merely *prudence* in relation to the ordinary concerns of life; not merely *sagacity* in the management of worldly concerns; not merely the elevations of mind which adorn the man of science and the scholar; for all these, and more than these, may be united in the same person, who may be nevertheless a fool before God;—but whilst we find in Mr. Ferrar all these qualities, we discover also a wisdom of a higher character, consisting in the fear of God, the knowledge of God, the love of God; in short, in *a right state of heart before God*.

True wisdom is the religion of the Bible; the religion of the Gospel; "the choice of the best end pursued by the best means." This was Ferrar's wisdom. St. Paul, when writing to Timothy, congratulates him, because that "from a child" he had known the holy Scriptures, which "are able to make *wise* unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." Ferrar also from a child was taught to believe



and reverence the holy Scriptures ; he saw that true wisdom has to do with our spiritual and immortal interests ; and, a foundation being thus laid in a sincere faith in the Gospel, he was armed at all points for the Christian warfare. Pleasure, fame, wealth, ambition, were all held as nothing with him, in comparison with the great end of existence, “ *being made wise unto salvation*, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” His retirement from busy life was not the result of disappointed ambition ; it was not the decision of a man soured by the neglect of an unfeeling or capricious world ; nor was it the consequence of fallen fortunes, or declining health ; but the deliberate, judicious, *wise* resolve of a man whom ambition might have raised to a lofty pinnacle of worldly honour ; whose counsel and society were courted by the excellent, the learned, and the noble ; whose great powers of mind and strength of body were scarcely in their zenith of manly vigour ; and yet who voluntarily resigned all prospects, promises, and offers of worldly advantage, for that calm course, wherein retirement might be made useful to himself and others ; and he and they might,

by the blessing of the Most High upon the means, be made “*wise unto salvation.*”

It was said of Nicholas Ferrar, that he was a demonstration against those who say that the constitution of man’s body can scarce be so evenly tempered as to be equally capable of a quick wit, a strong memory, and a deep judgment. His humility, prudence, charity, temperance, industry, were all in that degree, and of that constancy, that all who knew him well, in our time and nation, will say, with one mouth, that he was incomparably the best man we knew !”

“ Mark,” then, “ the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

AMONG the members of the Ferrar family at Gidding, there was one who was blessed with a similarity of genius to the subject of the foregoing memoir, and who also possessed remarkable accomplishments in learning and virtue. He was the son of Mr. John Ferrar, and nephew and namesake of Nicholas. He was born in the year 1620; and when he became capable of instruction, his uncle took him under his own immediate care; and finding in him a quickness of parts, and a turn of disposition congenial to his own, he instructed and assisted him in the same course of studies which he himself had pursued in the early part of his life. In these he made such a rapid proficiency as was the astonishment of all who knew him, and, could it not be proved by sufficient testimony, might occasion a great difficulty of belief.

In Dr. Peckard's life of his uncle, we find the following observations respecting Nicholas Ferrar, junior:—

“ It cannot be expected that the life of a young man, who scarce ever went from the sequestered place of his education, and died before he was one and twenty, should abound with incidents ; but if the term of existence were to be measured by virtue and knowledge, few would be found who have lived so long.

“ This extraordinary youth was dearly beloved of his uncle, who spared no diligence or expense in his education ; providing able tutors both in the sciences and in languages, and bestowing great part of his own time in his instruction. He too, like his uncle, with uncommon quickness of parts, and extraordinary strength of memory, possessed an equal ardour for improvement, and an indefatigable spirit of application.”

For some additional particulars, the editor has had recourse to Dr. Wordsworth’s valuable, instructive, and interesting work of ecclesiastical biography, wherein, as an appendix to the life of Nicholas Ferrar, senior, he transcribes from a MS. in the Lambeth library (which appears to be written by Mr. John Ferrar) an account of Nicholas Ferrar, junior’s, visit to London, its object and result. The narrative

is here abridged, but it is hoped may be deemed not an uninteresting sequel to these memoirs.

During his uncle's life, Nicholas Ferrar, junior, was employed by him in the translation of Mynsinger's Devotions, a volume containing a large collection of prayers for all sorts and conditions of men. There were also seven other greater works *finished*, and one only *devised*, in which young Ferrar took a very prominent part. The *second* of these works, in the order in which they are mentioned in the MS. before alluded to, was that book which had been compiled at Gidding by the command of King Charles the First, and to which reference has already been made in a former part of these memoirs. It was called "the History of the Israelites, from the death of King Saul to the carrying away captive into Babylon," &c. The *third work* was occasioned and effected upon a letter sent to Gidding from a person of honour, intimating that the prince, having seen the king his father's book (that is, the book which was first of all presented him, the Concordance of the Four Evāngelists), would have begged it of the king, but he told him that

he might not part with that rich jewel, for he daily made use of it ; but if he desired one, he made no question but the same heart and hands that framed his would fit him also with one for his use, and hoped he would make use of it, for it was the book of books, &c.

Upon the intimation given of the prince's desire, though Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, senior, was then with God, yet his young nephew that bare his name, having seen all the former works done in the house, did, in concurrence with others of his family, determine to go beyond the expectation of the prince ; and as he had attained to the knowledge of many languages, he thought a concordance of *four several languages* would be more useful and beneficial and pleasant to the young prince's disposition ; and so, they, uniting their heads and hands lovingly together, did devote certain portions of time in every day to the formation of the work until it was completed. It was then, upon consultation, thought fitting that it should not go single and alone, but to stay awhile till Nicholas Ferrar, junior, had finished *four* other pieces of works, wherein were displayed the extraordinary proficiency he had made in the knowledge

of languages. All these five pieces, that one for the prince and four for the king, being made ready, they were carried up to London ; but in the way they went by Cambridge, and there were shewed to some eminent persons, a bishop then present there, and other learned scholars. All these learned men gave their approbation to the works, and no small commendation, as well as admiration, that they were so contrived and ordered, for substance and form, by one of those tender years.

Nicholas Ferrar coming to London, as he had directions, addressed himself to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom he was received not merely with cordiality, but with tenderness and affection, who desired a sight of the books ; which, when he had well seen and perused, he very highly commended in every particular. After much discourse, he permitted young Ferrar to depart, giving him directions that next day in the afternoon, being Maundy-Thursdaiy, he should meet him at Whitehall. The archbishop came at the appointed time, and found Ferrar and others waiting his leisure. " Come," said he, " follow me where I go ;" and then led them into a room where the king stood by the

fire, with many nobles attending him. When the king saw the archbishop enter the room, he said, "What ! have you brought with you those rarities and jewels you told me of?" "Yes, sire, here is the young gentleman and his works." So, taking him by the hand, he led him up to the king. He falling down on his knees, the king gave him his hand to kiss, bidding him rise up. A box was opened, and Nicholas Ferrar presented to the king that book made for the prince, who, first admiring its splendid binding and appendages, said, "Here is a fine book for Charles indeed ! I hope it will soon make him in love with what is within it, for I know it is good." So, opening it, and with much pleasure perusing it, he said merrily to the lords, "What think ye of it ? For my part, I like it in all respects exceeding well, and find Charles will here have a double benefit by the well contrivement of it, and not only obtain, by a daily reading of it, a full information of our blessed Saviour's life, doctrine, and actions (the chief foundation of Christian religion), but the knowledge of four languages. A couple of better things a prince cannot desire, nor the world recommend unto him. And



lo ! here are also store of rare pictures to delight his eye with."

Then Nicholas Ferrar, the king looking upon him, bowing said, " May it please your majesty, this work was undertaken upon the prince's command. But I dared not present it to him till it had your majesty's approbation and allowance." " Why so ?" said the king ; " it is an excellent thing for him, and will do him much good." " Sir," said Ferrar, " my learned and religious wise uncle, under whose wings I was covered, and had my education from my youth, gave me, amongst other rules, this one, that I should never give any thing, though never so good and fitting, to any person whatever that had a superior over him, without his consent and approbation first obtained . . . I have therefore come, by the favour of my lord of Canterbury, to present this piece unto your majesty's view, and to beg your good leave to carry it to the prince." The king heard the youth with attention, and, turning to the lords, commended the counsel and the practice of it ; and then addressing the archbishop, said, " Let this young gentleman have your letters to the prince to-morrow, to Rich-

mond, and let him carry this present. It is a good day you know, and a good work would be done upon it."

Nicholas Ferrar then produced the four other works which had been prepared for the acceptance of the king, the inspection of which excited in the highest degree his majesty's admiration. It appeared marvellous in his eyes that a young man of twenty-one years of age "should attain to the understanding and knowledge of more languages than he was years old;" for one of the books was the New Testament translated into *twenty-four languages*; and that he *knew* those several languages, and could translate them all into English or Latin, he gave irrefragable proof before he left the royal presence. The inspection of these works occupied some time, and the king exclaimed: "We have spent part of our Maundy-Thurseday to good purpose." The nobles also expressed their wonder and delight at what they had seen. At last, the king, looking upon Nicholas Ferrar, repeated his command that he should go the next morning to Richmond, and carry to the prince the book prepared for him. "And after the holyday," said he, "return to my lord of

Canterbury, and then you shall know my good approbation of all you have done ; and he shall signify to you my will and pleasure what I will have you to do, and where you are to go.” He then dismissed him with a cheerful royal look.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following morning Nicholas Ferrar, having received his introductory letter to the prince’s tutor, was sent off to Richmond by the archbishop, in a coach with four horses, and on his arrival presented his credentials. His reception by Bishop Duppa (the tutor) was of the most flattering description, who forthwith ushered him into the presence of Prince Charles, to whom he presented the book. The prince hastily opened it, saying, “Here’s a gallant outside,” and gave it to the bishop, who read the title-page and frontispiece. Then the prince took it, and turning it all over, leaf by leaf, said, “Better and better.” . . . . “It pleaseth me exceedingly, and I wish daily to read in it.” Many questions were asked and answered ; and the little Duke of York, having also seen the book and the fine pictures in it, came to Nicholas Ferrar, and said, “Will you not make me also such another fine book ? I

pray you do it." Ferrar promised the young prince that it should be done ; and the courtiers who stood by laughed\* heartily at the duke's earnestness, who would have no nay. The prince at last went to dinner, expressing much joy at his book.

The bishop took Ferrar by the hand, and, with great demonstration of favour, led him into a room where the Duke of Buckingham and other nobles were, who sitting down to dinner, the bishop placed Nicholas Ferrar by the table at his side. The bishop demanded many questions at table concerning Gidding, to which he received satisfaction ; saying, my lord of Canterbury's letters had informed him of what had passed before the king at Whitehall, and of the rare pieces which were shewed the king, whereof, he said, he hoped one day to have the happiness to see them ; and added, " this present given the prince was very acceptable, and he made no question but the prince would receive not only much pleasure in it, but great good by it in every kind."

\* The book was made and printed, but no opportunity ever occurred to present it.

After dinner, the bishop led Ferrar into a room where were the prince, the duke, and divers court ladies looking upon the book. . . . After many questions demanded and answered, it growing late, Ferrar craved leave to depart; and humbly bowing to the prince, his highness rose up, and came towards him, and moving his hat, said, "I am much beholden to you for the jewel you have given me, and for the contrivement of it; and to the Gidding gentlewomen, that have taken so much pains about it, to make it so curious a piece." Then putting his hand into his pocket, he pulled out a handful of twenty-shilling pieces of gold, saying (Nicholas Ferrar stepping back), "Nay, I do not give you this as any reward in recompense of your book, for I esteem it every way above much gold, and prize it at a far greater rate; only you shall take this as a present testimony of my acceptance of it, and my esteem of you; I shall study how I may in the future let all know how much I deem of your worth and the book:" and then gave him his handful of gold. And so Nicholas Ferrar departing, divers courtiers would needs accompany him to his coach, and the bishop down stairs;

and thus, with great demonstration of much civility, they parted, the bishop willing his secretary to accompany him to the coach.

Saturday morning, repair was made to the archbishop, to let him know what had passed at Richmond; for so he had given order, who said he much longed to know what entertainment was given to the book and person. He liked all well that passed, and said he was right glad that things went as he hoped, and should acquaint the king with all. Then taking Nicholas Ferrar's father aside, he said, "Let your care now cease for your hopeful son, or for his future preferment, or estate, or present maintenance. God has so inclined the king's heart and his liking to your son, and the gifts God hath endued him with; and having been informed of his virtuous pious education and singular industry, and Christian deportment and sober inclination,—that he will take him from you into his own protection and care, and make him his scholar and servant; and hath given me order, that after the holydays being past I should send him to Oxford, and that there he shall be maintained in all things needful for him at the king's own charge, and

shall not need what he can desire to further him in the prosecution of those works he hath begun in matter of languages. . . . Assure yourself he shall want nothing. In a word, the king is greatly in love with him, and you will and have cause to bless and praise God for such a son." So Mr. John Ferrar, being ravished with joy, in all humble manner gave thanks to my lord's grace. And they returning to Nicholas Ferrar, my lord embraced him, and gave him his benediction. Nicholas Ferrar, kneeling down, took the archbishop's hand and kissed it. He took him up in his arms, and laid his hand to his cheek, and earnestly besought Almighty God to bless him and increase all graces in him, and fit him every day more and more for an instrument of his glory here upon earth, and a saint in heaven; "which," said he "is the only happiness that can be desired, and ought to be our chief end in all our actions. God bless you! God bless you! I have told your father what is to be done for you after the holydays. God will provide for you better than your father can: God bless you and keep you!" So they parted from his grace.

But he never saw him more ! On Easter day (being next morning) he was desirous to receive the communion at St. Paul's, whither he went at an early hour and communicated ; and returning home, had little appetite to his dinner, eating little or nothing. He went, yet, to a sermon in the afternoon, but at night grew somewhat worse.

On Monday morning his father sent for a learned physician, who came and visited him, and gave him what he thought fitting : but he grew worse and worse. Then was another physician joined to the first ; they consulted and prescribed, but he mended not ; but with great patience and cheerfulness did bear his sickness, wholly committing himself to God's good will and pleasure ; only telling his friends and the Bishop of Peterborough (that loved him dearly, and came to visit him twice in that short time), that he was no way troubled to die, and to go to heaven, where he knew was only peace and quiet, and permanent joys ; whereas all things in the world were but trouble and vexation : "and as death must be the end of all men, he that went soonest to heaven was the happiest man." The



bishop said, on retiring, that Nicholas Ferrar was better prepared to die than he, and was a true child of God, and could comfort himself in God, without directions from him or others ; that his pious education, under his pious uncle of blessed memory, his old and dear friend, was now shewed forth in these his so young years, that they had taken mighty root downward, and in his soul, and now sprang up with not only leaves and fair blossoms, but with good and ripe fruit of heavenly matters. . . . The bishop also endeavoured to prepare Mr. John Ferrar for the death of his son. He begged him not to dwell upon his own loss, but to look to that crown which his son, by the mercies of God and merits of his Saviour, he was persuaded would enjoy in heaven. “ He is too good, he is too good,” said he, “ to live longer in these ill approaching times. . .” Tumults had, in fact, then begun ; and the Archbishop of Canterbury’s house at Lambeth was one night assaulted by a rabble of lewd people ; which when Nicholas Ferrar was told of, as he lay in his sick-bed, “ Alas ! alas !” said he, “ God help his church and poor England ! I now fear, indeed, what my dear uncle said be-

fore he died is at hand, that evil days were coming, and happy were they who went to heaven before they came. It is high time that supreme authority take care of these growing evils. God amend all ! Truly, truly, it troubles me.” And at another time, when some one said to him, “Are you not grieved to leave this world, you who are now so young, and in the flower of your youth and hopes ?” he answered cheerfully, “No, truly, I leave all to God’s good will and pleasure ; he is my best father, and knoweth what is best for me. Alas ! I am too young to be mine own judge what is best for me, to die or live ; but let all be as God’s will is. If I live, I desire it may be to his further glory, and the comfort and service that I intend to be to my father, who loves me so dearly, and in his old age to be his servant. If I die, I hope my father will submit all to God’s will and pleasure, and rejoice at my happiness in heaven, where, by the merits of my blessed Lord and Saviour, I know I shall go out of this wretched life.”

In this manner, and upon the visits of friends, he would discourse. The bishop came to him two days before he died, who found

him in a most cheerful state of mind, ready to depart and be with God. The bishop addressed his father, saying, "God give you consolation, and prepare you to part with your good son. He will in a few hours, I think, go to a better world; for he is no way for this that I see, by his body and by his soul. Be of good comfort; you give him but again to Him that gave him to you for a season."

In two days after, God took him away: he died praying and calling upon God, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul! Lord, receive it! Amen!"

This young man, as remarkable for his early piety as for his extraordinary talents and attainments, departed this life in May 1640. But the connexion between the king and the Ferrar family did not cease on his death. For it appears, from several papers still in being, that there was what may be justly called a friendly intercourse subsisting, even till the distressful year of 1646. It was in April of that year that the king left Oxford. Being unresolved how to dispose of himself, he shifted about from place to place, with his trusty

chaplain, Dr. Hudson, and at length came to Downham, in Norfolk. From thence he came, on May 2d, to *Gidding*. The king having an entire confidence in the family, made himself known to Mr. John Ferrar, who received his majesty with all possible duty and respect; but fearing that *Gidding*, from the known loyalty of the family, might be a suspected place, for better concealment he conducted his majesty to a private house at Coppinford, an obscure village at a small distance from *Gidding*, and not far from *Stilton*. Here the king slept, and went thence, May 3, to *Stamford*, and from thence, on May the 5th, to the Scotch army.

The distresses of the unhappy monarch, independently of the last bloody scene of the tragedy, excited commiseration in the hearts even of some who never sided amongst his partisans in the war. We are told in the life of Thomas Rosewell, afterwards a dissenting minister, and who was found guilty of treason in the reign of Charles the Second, that, “travelling a little from home, he accidentally saw King Charles the First in the fields, sitting at dinner under a tree, with some few persons about

him." This made such a deep impression in his mind as disposed him to the greater compassion and loyalty towards the unhappy king. Dr. Hudson (before mentioned), the faithful companion of the king's flight, made himself, by his uncompromising loyalty and zeal in the king's service, extremely obnoxious to the tyrant parliamentary party. Twice, in the years 1646 and 1648, was he taken prisoner and escaped; but at last, pressed by the opponents of the king, he fled with others to Woodcroft House, near Peterborough. The house being forced, and most of the royalists taken, Hudson, with some of the most courageous, went to the battlements, where they defended themselves for some time. At length, *upon promise of quarter*, they yielded; and when they had so done, the *promise of quarter was broken*. Hudson, being thrown over the battlements, caught hold of a spout or out-stone, and there hung; but his hands being cut off, he fell into the moat underneath, much wounded, and desired to come on land to die there. As he approached the shore, one of his enemies beat out his brains with the but-end of his musket!

Mr. Ferrar, *a little before his death*, had said to his brother John, “ Sad times are coming on, *very sad times*, and you will live to see them.” The prediction was fulfilled ! John Ferrar had not only to mourn over the death of his worldly comforts, in the decease of his much-beloved brother and son, but lived to witness the breaking up of the establishment at Gidding, the destruction of his property, and the dispersion of the family. During Mr. Ferrar’s life, they had suffered the persecution of slander and misrepresentation. They had been vilified as Papists ; they had been abused as Puritans ; their establishment had been denounced even to parliament as an “ Arminian nunnery,” in an inflammatory pamphlet full of invective, malignity, and falsehood.

Mr. Ferrar himself, though possessed of uncommon patience and resignation, was yet known, in anguish of spirit, to complain to his friends that the perpetual obloquy he endured was a sort of unceasing martyrdom. But *after his death* persecution became more open, more daring—sanctioned by the dominant parliamentary tyranny of those wretched times. The establishment at Little Gidding became an

object of abhorrence and persecution by the zealots who hated forms of devotion and loyalty to the king.

An attachment and adherence to forms in divine worship was motive enough for persecution by persons who held all religious forms as arrant superstition ; and even the graces of piety, charity, and benevolence, which distinguished the household of Gidding-hall could not disarm bigotry of its sting, nor persecution of its malice.

A short time before the commission of actual violence, Bishop Williams paid his last friendly visit at Gidding, and seeing the inscription in the parlour (which has been before alluded to), he said to Mr. John Ferrar, " I would advise you to take this tablet down. You see the times grow high and turbulent, and no one knows where the rage and madness of the people may end. I am just come from Boston, where I was used very coarsely. I do not speak as by authority, I only advise you as a friend, for fear of offence, or worse consequences." Then, after sincerely condoling with them on their family bereavements, he bade them his final farewell ; but ever after

continued their firm friend, and constantly vindicated the family from the many slanders of their false accusers. No family perhaps suffered more from less cause of offence; for though they were pious and firm members of the Church of England, they behaved themselves quietly, and with Christian benevolence, towards all men of all denominations; and although they practised austerities which were not exceeded by some of the severe monastic institutions, yet they neither required them from others, nor in themselves attributed any saving merit to them—austerities which mistaken piety thought a duty, but which, it must be confessed, have not any proper foundation in the Christian institution.

Not long before the mournful tragedy which closed the mortal career of King Charles, certain soldiers of the parliament party resolved to plunder Mr. Ferrar's house; and these military despots, in the rage of what they called reformation, ransacked the church and house at Little Gidding. In this work of destruction they manifested a peculiar spite against the organ; this they broke in pieces, of which they made a large fire, and roasted thereat



several of Mr. (John) Ferrar's sheep, which they had killed on his grounds. This done, they seized all the plate, furniture, and provision, which they could conveniently carry away. In this devastation perished some works of Nicholas Ferrar's which merited a better fate. The establishment was thus broken up, and the family dispersed.

“ Little Gidding,” it has been observed, “ was in England what Port-Royal was in France. Ardent devotion to the Redeemer characterised both. In each, peace, charity, good order, and love to the souls and bodies of men, were eminently exhibited; upon each the hand of persecution fell with unrelenting severity. Port-Royal was destroyed by the Jesuits — Little Gidding by the Puritans.”

The rage and malice of men is, however, happily kept within bounds by the over-ruling power and providence of God; and often when rulers and people devise nothing short of absolute destruction, they imagine “ a vain thing.” The manor-house of Gidding was plundered, and the inhabitants were driven to seek shelter and safety elsewhere. In this day, after an interval of nearly two centuries, the

abode of the Ferrars has indeed ceased to exist, but *the church still stands*; and the zeal and liberal piety of the good mother of that family, in renovating the then desecrated edifice, and restoring the alienated property of the living, is still found to be a blessing which the assaults of persecution could not reach nor destroy. The permanent provision thus made for the support of the minister of religion at Gidding has preserved to the neighbouring population the means of grace in the due performance of the rites and ordinances of the Established Church; and at this very time the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is preached with fidelity, earnestness, and zeal, within the very walls once consecrated by the piety of the Ferrars. *They* “rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

THE END.

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